NEW TIMES

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A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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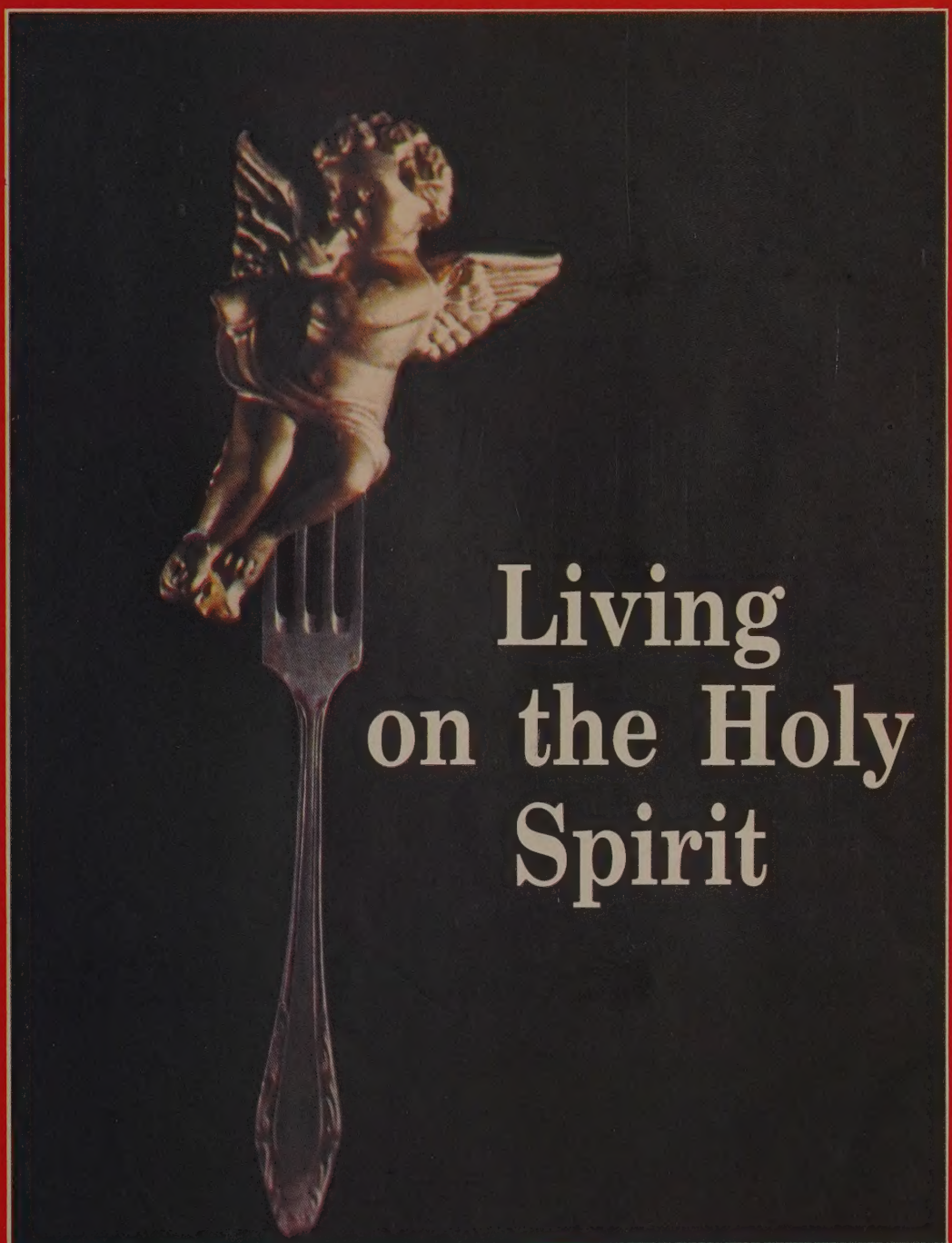

Living on the Holy Spirit

ISSN 0206–1473

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A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

No. 26, 1991
Founded 1945

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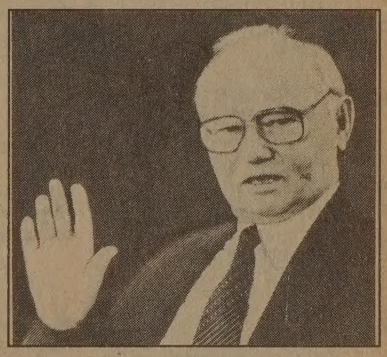

Must Gorbachev sack the KGB boss?

p.4

Two years after Khomeini died they cry out again in Teheran: "Death to America! Death to Russia!"

p.20

Cover by Victor Brel

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From our mailbag

■ I am writing to you in connection with the letter from Petko Angelov of Bulgaria (No. 15/91). I think we could help Petko and people like him – those who cannot buy *New Times* in Bulgaria because the magazine is now available only for hard currency.

Here is my suggestion. Many Soviet subscribers discard the old issues of *New Times*. Instead of throwing them out, send them to foreign readers. Your issues will come later than they should, but this is not a problem, as *New Times* specializes in providing deep analysis, not hot news. The editors must establish some means of communication between Soviet readers and those who would like to read *New Times* abroad. We can afford such help, I am sure.

A. Livshits
Moscow, USSR

■ Conservative custodians of the old ways are forming a new crack unit. The new generation of hard-liners is a nice break from the likes of Nina Andreyeva and Alexander Nevzorov. Their distinctive features are self-control and decorum. Instead of their predecessors' cheap histrionics, they combine measured proportions of indignation and subtle irony. Their vocabulary does not include the monstrous ideological definitions as "running down" and "sweeping slander" so much favoured by earlier pro-Communist propagandists. They don't even use the expression "so-called democrats," thus hinting that the ideas of political pluralism and freedom are known to them. They claim to be objective in their assessments, broad-minded and well aware of the realities of life and the needs of their compatriots.

After I read the letter written by G. Burya (No. 13/91. The author insisted he had good knowledge of "the contemporary Soviet person" who is "happy working at a plant, or in the farm, or serving in the army"), I have been haunted by some very vivid impressions.

Here is one: my compatriot waiting for hours to buy a pair of poor-quality undies. But here he is again – operating a machine tool and being happy. After all, he did buy the undies yesterday. Or here is another one: listed in the endless line to get a state-owned flat, he relaxes in the company of his wife and his twin kids in their dwelling – a 12-sq.-metre room with frozen walls. And I can see him – the happy one – doing military service. And so on and so forth. Is there any need to contrast people standing in queues to those who are doing military service? Can't one feel happy in a queue? Of course one can! The more so as one Soviet slogan says: "If you want to be happy, be happy!"

F. Ozersky
Vologda, USSR

■ I am a regular subscriber of *New Times*. Your magazine is always topical and interesting. One thing surprises me, though. Why doesn't *New Times* write anything about the plight of the city of Ufa? The plight of Ufa may easily be as dramatic as the plight of Chernobyl. The chemical plants of our city have caused us so much suffering, so much pain. We are being poisoned with phenols and dioxine. Why don't you write about that?

Victor Shishin
Ufa, USSR

The day of mourning

■ Thank you for the article "A Day of Remembrance" by Lev Bezymensky. As a war veteran, I agree with the author that we do need to mark such a date. In general, I believe that we must remember the millions who died in the war, rather than glorify the victory for which such an enormous price was paid. We all, especially young people, need a Day of Remembrance instead of trumpeting. How many war veterans are still alive? Can it really be that so many years after the war, the state is still too poor to provide war veterans with decent living conditions?

Igor Sitnikov
Leningrad, USSR

■ Are you suggesting that we abolish Victory Day? This is a provocation aimed at millions of ordinary Soviet people who stood up against the Nazi onslaught and saved the honour, freedom and independence of this country. They saved from enslavement and extermination all peoples of the USSR, including the people to which Lev Bezymensky obviously belongs. Can this ever be forgotten?

A. Skvortsov
Moscow, USSR

■ I decided to write this letter to you after I read Bezymensky's article, "A Day of Remembrance" (*NT* No. 13/91). During the war my grandmother's sister was transported to Germany for forced labour. She tried to escape together with a friend, but they were caught and flung to the prison and later sent to the Mauthausen death camp. I have no words to describe the ill treatment she was subjected to there. After her time in the camp she could not have children, which was the most terrible thing for her.

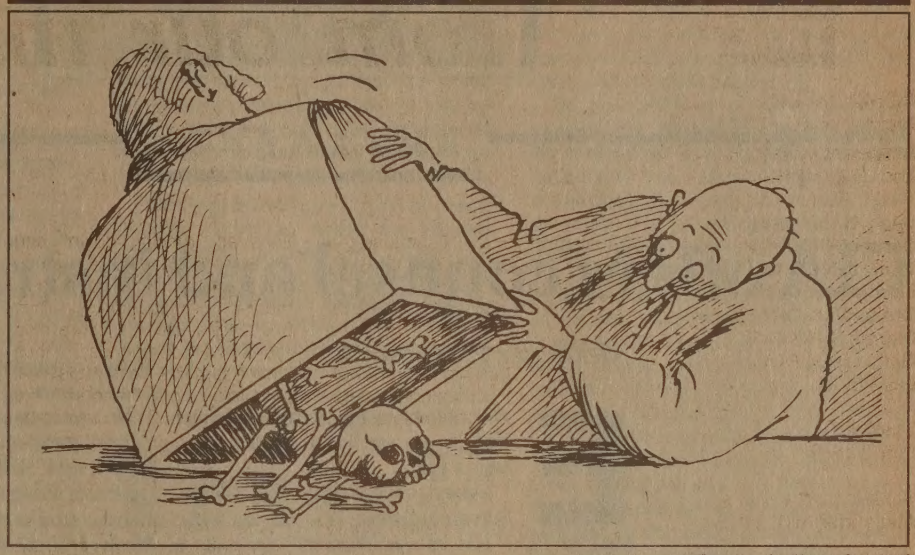
My relations tried to get her some compensation, but the authorities demanded documents that proved that her story was really true. It was impossible to explain to blockhead bureaucrats that Nazis did not issue any papers to death camp inmates. Recently I heard that people who had been taken for forced labour in Germany are entitled to compensation. I hope you understand that money is not the issue in this case, although our greataunt, an ordinary kolkhoz woman, does not have very much. What really matters is the person's moral comfort. She must get at least some compensation for

Helping the Bulgarians

Is buying underwear a reason to be happy?

Ufa's environmental plight

THE WAY I SEE IT



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

■ As the head of the Bulgarian Cultural and Information Centre in Moscow, I was delighted to read in your magazine the article "A Slavonic holiday in Russia" (No. 21/91), dedicated to the Day of the Slavonic Written Language and Bulgarian Culture and Enlightenment.

I hope that this article will provoke a response in the hearts of Slavic peoples and will arouse interest in the sources of our common culture, thus becoming a contribution to the great cause of Slavic unity.

Georgy Vatsov
Moscow, USSR

■ Your artists and designers are very good. Many thanks and cheers for Shein, Brel, Tishkov, Tal, Bogorad, Gursky, Nenashev and the rest. However, I would like to point out something I don't quite like or understand. Why did you change the front cover design? Why do you now place the title of the cover story in a yellow box at the top of the cover? Last year when the cover story title was printed in the triangle in the top right corner, the cover looked much better.

Why are your covers always red? Please use other colours, too. However, if other paints are technically unavailable, I withdraw my suggestion.

Like thousands of *New Times* readers, I clip the Manuscripts Do Not Burn materials from each issue. Have you ever thought of that? Why do you always publish these materials on page 40? Do you think it is possible to bind them properly?

Excuse me for this somewhat confused letter. I hope you understand that it is a call from a sympathetic reader.

Alexei Chernysh
Chernigov Region, USSR

■ Recently I read the book by Mikhail Kasvinov, entitled *Twenty-Three Steps Down*. It astonished me that the book has already been published for a third time. The author of the book continues to insist that the shooting of the Czar and his family, including children, was a necessary measure.

Last year I responded to the *New Times* questionnaire and stated my opposition to capital punishment. I also wrote to People's Deputies of the Russian Republic, Ryumin (Kazan) and Urazhtsev (Moscow). There has so far been no response, although at one meeting Ryumin said he was against capital punishment and would try to have capital punishment replaced by life imprisonment in the Soviet law. The draft of a new constitution of Russia narrows the application of capital punishment, but does not abolish it. I believe that every effort must be made to abolish this state-sponsored killing.

K. Vazersky
Ryazan, USSR

what she has suffered. The Red Army liberated her at the time when the Nazis were getting ready to exterminate all the inmates. The Soviet tanks rolled in just in time...

Today my greataunt lives in a village and breeds poultry. It's her native village – she was taken to Germany from there.

Yuri Petrochuk
Ivanovo, USSR

■ In *New Times* No. 1/91 I read the article "Memorial to the enemy," and I decided to write this letter.

In the summer of 1943, the Germans opened a cemetery to bury their dead in our village. The cemetery was located near the village church overlooking a nearby pond. It was calm and beautiful. After the war the cemetery was destroyed: A la guerre comme a la guerre... Today there are no traces of graves there. I think it would be a humane gesture to allow relations of the people once buried there to come collect the ashes or to restore the cemetery. We have no right to forget the war, but we must forget hatred. Hopefully, my information will be interesting for both Soviet and German organizations.

Nikolai Dolotov
Petrovskoye-1, Lugansk Region, the Ukraine

■ In his article "Vlasov and Vlasovites" (*NT* No. 44/90) Leonid Mlechin insists that the Vlasov army was formed three to four months before the end of the war and was involved in no actual fighting. I think this is incorrect. When I served on the front in 1943, I heard a lot about the Vlasovites, although I never encountered them personally.

In general, opinions about Vlasov are heavily influenced ideologically. Some people believe that Vlasov had always planned to defect to Hitler. Others declare that he was a patriot and a fighter against Stalinism (could Vlasov have been naive enough to think that the Germans would withdraw after liberating Russia?).

I believe that the writer Ilya Erenburg was the nearest to the truth when he described Vlasov as a campaigner with no political principles. He served the Soviet power as long as it paid. But in a situation when his loyalty might require his life, Vlasov did not hesitate to change sides.

Evaluate Vlasov according to his deeds, don't lapse into extremes.

Yu. Zakharyin
Moscow, USSR

Compiled by
Tatiana Chernova

EMERGENCY

CIA offers counsel and instruction

Alexander Pumpyansky

Either Vladimir Kryuchkov should himself resign or the President should retire him, as the KGB Chairman's "secret" address to the USSR Supreme Soviet offers no other alternative

Either the end of the world is drawing nigh, or we are being given a sky-high scare.

Indeed, addressing the USSR Supreme Soviet in a tie-up with Marshal Yazov and Interior Minister Pugo – certainly an impressive array! – KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov, it transpires, confidentially announced: "Reality is such that our Fatherland stands on the brink of disaster."

A document of but one and a half pages, which the KGB, we learn, sent the CPSU Central Committee back in 1977 – it was headed "CIA Designs to acquire agents of influence amidst Soviet citizens" – reveals the nature of the impending catastrophe and how it should be averted.

"The US CIA," it says, "is drafting out plans to step up hostile activity in order to demoralize Soviet society and disrupt the socialist economy." Definitely highly effective. But what was the CPSU Central Committee doing all these years? And why was the KGB mum?

Now we are told:

"To this end US intelligence has set itself the task of recruiting agents of influence from among Soviet citizens, of instructing them and of subsequently promoting within the administration of politics, economics and science of the Soviet Union." The task has quite plainly been accomplished, for otherwise whence our present-day troubles?

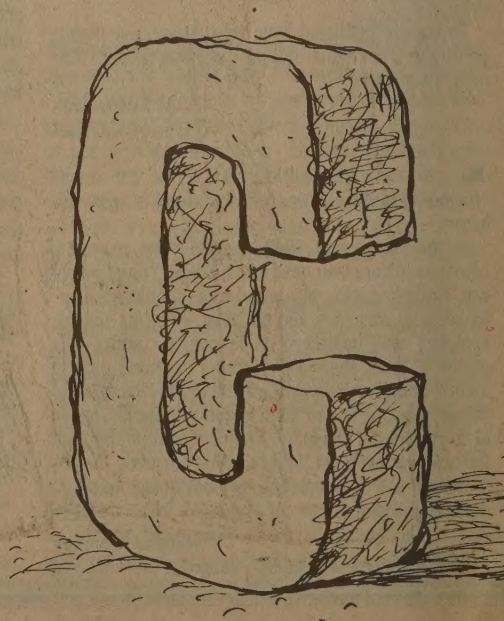
"A paramount aspect for training such agents is instruction in methods of management within the economy's top echelon. The chiefs of the US Secret Service are planning purposefully and persistently, regardless of expense, to seek out persons capable by virtue of personal and business qualities, of assuming future administrative office in the apparatus of management and of discharging tasks that the enemy has formulated." Down to a tee. They have found, instructed, promoted, seized and reliably wrecked everything created over seven decades of heroic labours and all because they went ahead regardless of expense.

Before the CPSU was responsible for personnel policy. Everything was OK then. Now the CIA is seemingly responsible. In the upshot the immense constructive efforts of our people, who under the Party's leadership had been advancing from success to success, have all been in vain.

No names are named. Yet, it is easy enough to conjecture who is meant. The entire new class of economists, all those shatalins and yavlinskies are agents of foreign influence. Is the President blind? But perhaps he doesn't have the information? No, he does. Vladimir Kryuchkov knows that for certain, as "we write about it in our documents addressed to the President." However, he is not lifting a finger. What does this mean?

It means this:

"... It is exactly half a century since war, the cruellest ever in the history of our peoples, was launched against the Soviet Union you have most likely read in the media today of how intelligence agents notified our leadership at the time about what the enemy was doing, what preparations were being made, that war threatened our country. As you know, this was not heeded then. I very much fear that after some amount of time passes, historians will research communications not only from the State Security Committee, but also from our other offices and departments, and will be amazed to see that there were very many things of



a most serious nature to which we did not attach due significance."

In this issue of *New Times* the reader will find material about intelligence and June 22. But does that mean Gorbachev is today's Stalin? We have certainly come to a pretty pass!

Some six months ago, in December 1990, Vladimir Kryuchkov addressed Soviet parliamentarians. Then the world's best informed man opened the eyes of the participants in the Fourth Congress of the USSR People's Deputies, indeed of all honest men and women to what had brought about the difficulties and troubles besetting us. This, he averred, was SABOTAGE! Indeed, *Pravda* featured his announcement under the heading "KGB versus Sabotage." We at once felt assured that if the KGB was going about it, we would have order, a new economic order that is. However, after six months of heroic labours by the Chekists on this front, the result has proved to be invisible. Now we, rather the deputies, confidentially learned that the matter, it transpires, is not only one of sabotage at home, but above all, of the CIA's subversive activities, of the appalling designs of the imperialist West.

"I will say even more. We have direct information as to the drafting of plans for the pacification, even occupation, of the Soviet Union..."

The confidential nature with which he spoke, the very office he occupies calls for automatic belief: however automatic belief has let us down time and again – which has been true of Vladimir Kryuchkov too. Last time, in order to shore up his hypothesis as to all-embracing sabotage, he cited "but a few of the established facts of concealment from sale to the population ... of a range of commodities," – an unerring argument. True, several *Komsomolskaya Pravda* chappies dared to check the matter through venues of the appropriate departments of internal affairs and – lo and behold! – not a single one of the "established facts" was confirmed. It was all sheer bosh. This time the KGB had itself padded the lie.

Retorting, the all-knowing and all-seeing Vladimir Kryuchkov nailed the Western grain trading Judases who, were supposedly selling us contaminated grain for our gold. A whole row blew up. It was demanded of the Soviets that they confirm or retract the accusation. There was nothing but austere silence in reply. We, so to speak, are poor, but we are proud, and do not descend to material substantiation.

Again retorting, the same man issued the sensational announcement as to the thousands of millions of rubles, with which the strongboxes of Swiss banks were presumably stocked. At least one person swallowed this mysterious tale about the gnomes of Zürich, who feed exclusively on our very own "wooden" rubles. A lackaday, this was none other than Premier Pavlov, evidently no graduate of CIA universities. In keeping with the traditions of the sloppiest of mystery stories, he implemented his scandalous expropriation of large-denomination bills. Again it was all stuff and nonsense, and the entire thing fizzled out.

Certainly an odd line of reasoning. The KGB chief has up his sleeve not facts and figures, but rumours and fears he himself circulates. Yet, the specific podium and the departmental aura impart both the charm of secrecy and the impressiveness of an authority. Which is absolutely impermissible in any self-respecting country.

I can understand that when waking at the crack of dawn, a well-known writer suddenly discovers that the enemy is already on the banks of the Volga an din despair calls for a new Stalingrad.

It is permissible for an author to confuse rantings with prophecies, as after all, it's his imagination at work. Why, I can even understand that notorious ideologue for whom abolition of the constitutional clause as to the Party's omnipotence is more frightening than the blood and thunder of the Great Patriotic War. After all, these are indeed those when who only hear themselves, and naught else. Yet this is all sheer amateurism, even though in this country of ours amateurs are also fond of getting by at the state expense. Still, we can explain that away as a peculiar form of Party minded principles. The old-order Party has indeed discerned a deadly threat to the habitual system of values and authority. For them genuine market reform, the policy of reintegration in the world economic system, the natural consensus to recognize the supremacy of the general laws of civilization, indeed comprise the end of the world, something more horrible than war itself. As for the obvious fact that their system is long bankrupt, having doomed a great people to humiliating pauperism is something for which they couldn't care less. Responsible for all the troubles are the saboteurs and the CIA. Just cock an ear to the man in the know, and you'll at once spot their tracks!

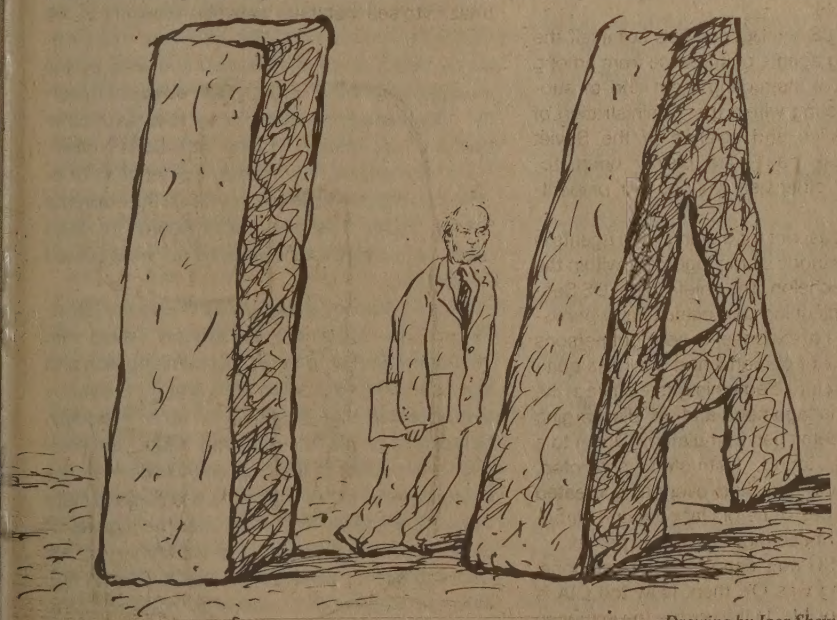
Incidentally, the militants of this party have every right to peddle their own views. Only not in the name of the state.

The chief of such a one hundred percent state department as the KGB may not cast aspersions at the chief of state. What to question his talks with the leaders of the West's seven industrialized powers? What, to engage in ideological trumpeting? Throughout the world secret services are of a totally different order: they appreciate the ability to ferret out information to hold tongues and of course, to maintain absolute loyalty. The opposition game is for others. State security is a professional, not a political nor an ideological, affair.

Back in the 1960s and the 1970s we were told about CIA analysis and prognostication. At that time the KGB helped nail the class enemy's vicious inventions as to the crisis that would supposedly beset us. However now, when this crisis has outvied the worst of prognostications, we learn that the CIA is to blame. That's what you have when a profession is ideologized.

Having broken the rules of his own service, and throwing down the glove to the President, Vladimir Kryuchkov has no alternative. Now he must either resign or the President must retire him.

Then as a free citizen he may preoccupy himself with agitprop or organize whatever he pleases.



Drawing by Igor Shein

The aggressively obedient majority is no longer obedient

Marina Shakina

The parliamentarians and ministerial cabinet sought to divide power behind the President's back. However, he told them they were wrong...

The crisis flared up from within, when Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov asked the USSR Supreme Soviet to grant his cabinet some of the President's powers. Was this on the spur of the moment? It transpired that the President had not been notified about this. On the other hand, there turned up in the meeting chamber much to the point, as if accidentally, the defence and interior ministers and the KGB chief, who took the floor to air views as to the situation at home and to express themselves in favour of Pavlov's request.

Meanwhile in the chamber itself the Soyuz lobby was acting most energetic, ally, so much so that it struck the eye against the background of general apathy and confusion.

Ella Pamfilova was one of the few deputies to come out against the Premier. She described the situation as an attempted constitutional coup. Yet there was one other definition, one perhaps even more appropriately conveying the nature of things, the hysteria in the Supreme Soviet.

Their own game

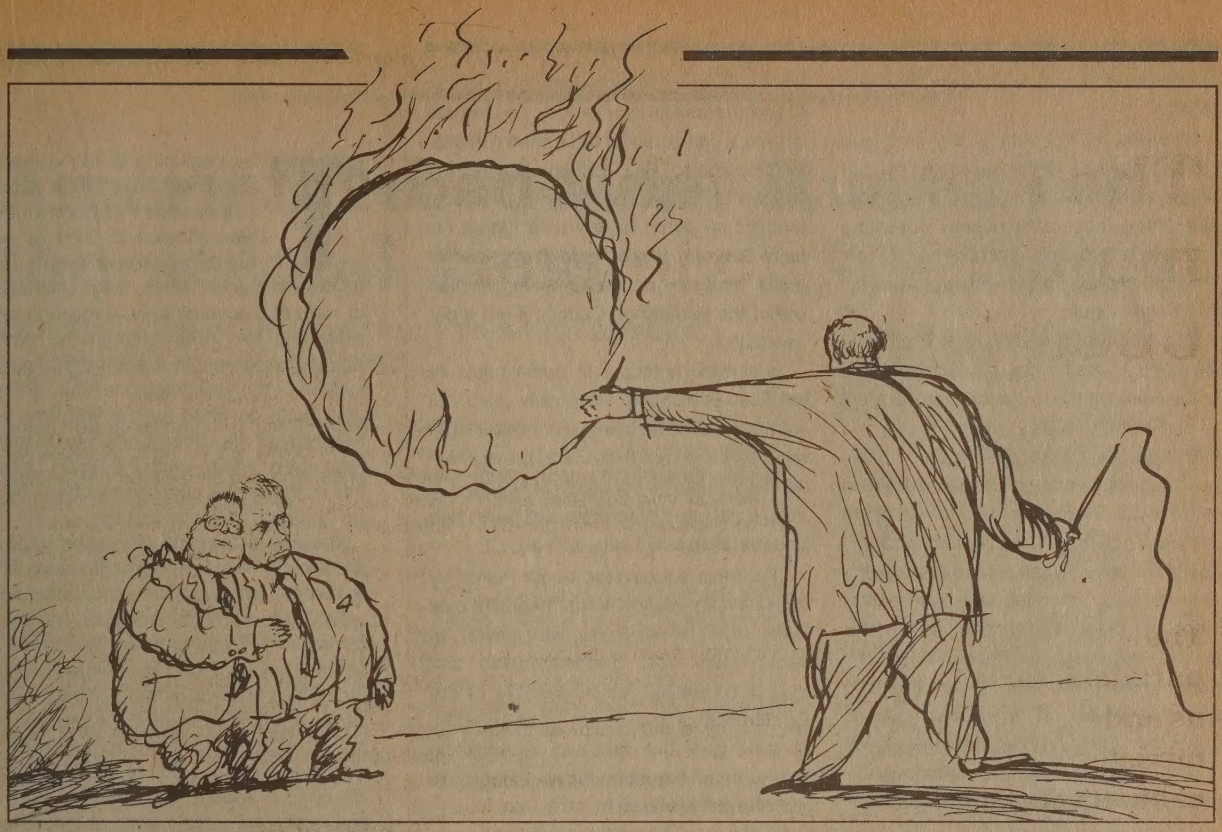
The parliamentary revolt links to three political highlights, notably the election of Yeltsin as Russia's President plus the circumstance that the two leaders increasingly realize their need for one another, the emergence of the new Union Treaty draft, the nine-plus-one accord, and the economic reform programme co-drafted by the Yavlinsky team and the Harvard University economists. All these three events have already had their impact and in the immediate future may essentially change the country's alignment of forces. It was these three "tremours" that provoked the hysteria in the Supreme Soviet.

As I see it, what is taking place in parliament may be described as "our having let go of the reigns of the Supreme Soviet." The "our" in this case implies the democrats, the President and the media. Two years ago Yuri Afanasyev diagnozed the situation in the Supreme Soviet as one of an "aggressively obedient majority." At that time, with the exception of a small group of prodemocracy deputies, the entire Parliamentary body was a tame, pocket membership, and Gorbachev must be credited for having achieved that. Indeed, the parliamentarians rushed to support the General Secretary-President each time he sounded the call to repulse the "machinations of the democrats." With facile ease he coaxed the Supreme Soviet into electing him President and investing him with emergency powers. True, it was only too willing to divest itself of these powers. The two understood one another. When leaving take over as President, Gorbachev left behind as speaker, as chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Anatoly Lukyanov, whom all considered Gorbachev's alter ego and mouthpiece. One may recall Roy Medvedev's emotional harangue, that it was important for the President to leave behind a man, in whom he could place full trust, in which connection he alluded to the University friendship of the two politicians. As I see it, until recently the influence that Lukyanov exerted on the parliamentarians was precisely due to his having been the President's shadow.

Degeneration

The Supreme Soviet gradually and unnoticeably degenerated. Interest in its activity slackened according as political life grew brisker in the republics. The Union parliament's inability to cope resulted in the public at first calling for its dessolution. Subsequently it was shrugged off. Moreover, the passions running in the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet were definitely more entertaining than the semi-attended soporific sessions of the USSR Supreme Soviet. The democrats had evidently erred, when disillusioned and tired by the struggle against the "aggressively obedient majority" they started one after another to look for other points of application. In their time Boris Yeltsin, Alexei Emelyanov, Yuri Ryzhov and Anatoly Sobchak had captained the democrats in the Supreme Soviet. Today they are neither heard nor seen there. Some went themselves, others were ousted by rotation.

After Gorbachev's election as President, his influence over parliament also greatrly waved with the pocket Supreme Soviet succumbing less and less to his charisma. Meanwhile Anatoly Lukyanov demonstrated that he should be taken seriously. Scarcely can he be regarded today as Gorbachev's prefect in the Supreme Soviet. He appears to have his own interests and plans, a state thrown particularly into relief after the signing of the nine-plus-one accord. He is carrying on his own struggle for survival: whereas before he had inherited Gorbachev's mantle by now he exerts personal influence.



Drawing by Igor Shein

In the absence of the democrats and Gorbachev, the ideology of the Soyuz lobby, whose members were one political scientist styled unitarian-great-power advocates gained headway, virtually unhampered in the Supreme Soviet. Evidently Anatoly Lukyanov helped.

The Supreme Soviet which had so serenly gone into vacation after January 13, and which had so reluctantly and laboriously reacted to the events in Azerbaijan and the Karabakh enclave, to the smashing up of Lithuanian customs posts, to the entry of troops into Moscow, and to the price hikes behind its back, now swiftly and sharply reacted to the nine-plus-one accord, which it qualified as unconstitutional. It declared that it has been ignored, that the "one" in this equation designating the Centre's consent was the President, not the Supreme Soviet. Parliamet felt slighted. However the matter is more than that.

Democrat deputies have told me more than once that the Supreme Soviet is demoralized. Even those go-getting well-intentioned deputies who had sincerely desired to promote change, seeing that nothing could be done soon, are behind the ordinary mortal looking to Number One. Some from among those, who following rotation are no longer in the Supreme Soviet and who ought to go back to their electoral districts, are still reluctant to vacate the Moscow housing granted for their Supreme Soviet mission. Further the nine-plus-one accord threatens early dissolution of the Congress of People's Deputies and a new election.

Wandering powers

As this accord brings into question the personal lot and career not only of deputies, but also of governmental executives, could that explain the Prime Minister's demarche?

At the outset, without the President's knowledge and in his absence he asked for additional powers. He averred that Gorbachev should not bear the entire load, that the President was one thing and the cabinet, another. Odd to say the least, since the President was one thing and the cabinet, another. Odd to say the least, since the President is precisely the chief executive. With backing from the deputies, Pavlov almost acquired these powers. True, when the President was invested with legislative powers, those self-same deputies had wondered why this was necessary, as the Supreme Soviet was there, a constitutional by-established legislative body constantly in session. This time virtually nobody wondered why some of the President's functions should be handed to the Prime Minister, though the President was in office and was discharging his duties.

With us it has become all the thing to ask for additional powers and also all the thing to grant these powers to all and sundry, to wit from Parliament to President, from President to Prime Minister, from which it is but a short cry to a situation, when ministers and departmental chiefs will be enacting their own laws, claiming again that "they do not have adequate powers to work efficiently and effectively."

However, there was more to Pavlov's request than that. Answering questions from the floor, he clearly transcended the limitations of his executive office, criticizing republican leaders and the country's foreign policy, and calling in question our foreign economic strategy. He revealed ungratified political ambitions, showing off his differences with the President.

What motivated him? Evidently, unwillingness to become another Ryzhkov, whose economic programme had been overshadowed by the 500-day project. Now the self-same Yavlinsky has drafted one more programme this time in collaboration with Harvard University economists, and as far as one can judge, it is only in response to this programme that

the West will be inclined to extend aid and credit.

However, in Parliament the emerging picture showed that the Supreme Soviet or Soyuz lobby had dished up a new placeman. Pavlov echoed Kryuchkov's pet song and dance, hinting at a conspiracy by certain dark forces – "which did not come off," the Premier noted.

The President quickly put the Premier in his place. Indeed it may be even said that he rescued Pavlov, although it is doubtful as to whether he can expect thanks. He helped Pavlov to extricate himself from this quandary, declaring he had no differences with Pavlov. True, at times one heard him irritatedly note that "I can't understand why Pavlov is silent." Whatever the case, on the very next day after the events in parliament, but before Gorbachev had addressed the deputies, the President and the Prime Minister sat side by side radiating gracious smiles at their distinguished guest from the European community to wit Delors. A couple of days later Pavlov averred that he had been misunderstood.

With London ahead there is nowhere to retreat

One must certainly give Gorbachev his due. His conduct from beginning to end was unerring, starting with his request to postpone the matter until he had familiarized himself with Pavlov's bid, and closing with his impassioned harangue in the Supreme Soviet and his replies to questions from the floor. What he said boiled down to the point that he did not plan to walk out and that while in office, would not allow any attacks against Soviet foreign policy, any attempt to spoil relations with the world community, any conservative spokes in the wheel of advance. The impression, it must be said, was that the Supreme Soviet having felt its master's firm hand, had quietened down even with some amount of satisfaction. For the first time now Gorbachev barbed for Soyuz and its advocates.

At this juncture the President played an impeccable role. It is futile for the unitarian great-power lobbyists to try to vie with him. They simply haven't got what gives. But perhaps the mistake was made earlier? Having produced an obedient, not a convinced Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev is now to some extent its victim today. As time has shown, a parliament of this nature can easily succumb to "bad" influences when the "master" is away. The President had also thought he could at any time ignore his tame Supreme Soviet. Indeed all his latest major strategic decisions were adopted within the Federation Council if not independently.

True, time pressure in some measure justifies his actions. He plainly does not want to waste time trying to convince Parliament's head that this or that move is essential. Needed, if not practical action, is at least a package of reforms and guarantee that the West could take on trust.

The President covered up for Pavlov by no means for reason of his "beautiful blue eyes." The decisiveness with which he spoke was quite understandable and largely compelled, as on the eve of the Conference of the Seven in London, he certainly does not want such excesses in the Supreme Soviet and open differences with the Prime Minister.

The Supreme Soviet flash-in-the-pan has shown that at a time of crisis each and every element in our legislative and executive systems plays its own game, concluding temporary alliances on the basis of common interest. It has demonstrated that parliament should not be overlooked, as from an "aggressively obedient" agency it may well transform into an aggressive one.

What conclusions will the President draw? Whether as regards the Union treaty, or economic reform, he has, in effect nowhere to retreat, as behind lies Yeltsin's Moscow, and in front London. The "500-day" clash will scarcely come again, even though Gorbachev did let drop certain conciliatory words to the effect that the Pavlov programme has little to differ from the Harvard project. Hopefully this time Gorbachev will not renege on his decision, will not yield to pressure. He still has two problems to cope with in Parliament. One is the Soyuz lobby, the other is the "armed" ministers, whose stories about the CIA conspiracy and a threatened attack, which they have aired more than once in the Supreme Soviet, ring out more and more loudly. One thinks Gorbachev currently faces difficult decisions, not adroit compromise, in which our President has always excelled.

The beginning of the visit was significant. The White House emphasized that Boris Yeltsin was allowed to land at Andrews air force base. This privilege is granted only to kings and heads of state and governments. A meeting between the two presidents in the White House lasted one hour and forty minutes instead of the scheduled one hour. "President Bush declared for the first time the readiness of his administration to do business at two levels – with the Soviet Union, that is, the centre, and with republics, Russia included," Yeltsin said later.

The two presidents discussed various problems – from the non-proliferation and reduction of nuclear and chemical weapons to the forthcoming seven-nation summit and Russia's role in Soviet defence policy. They agreed to form expert groups for drafting accords on the joint implementation of programmes for the processing and storing of agricultural products, on the annual training of 2,000 to 2,500 Russian citizens in modern management, on the conversion of defence-related industries, taking American experience into account, and on the founding of airlines with the participation of both parties. President Bush also agreed to consider the founding of a joint Russian-American bank to assist in privatization.

It is not a matter of aid, Boris Yeltsin pointed out. "We do not want to go begging," he said. It is a matter of opening Russia to foreign investors and creating the most favourable conditions for them in the field of taxation and customs.

"I am sure that, as it was in 1924, a stage of diplomatic recognition of Russia will begin after this visit," Andrei Kozyrev, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, told me. "It will not be instead of the Union but simultaneously with it, because the concepts of Russia and the Union are indivisible. At the same time, as distinct from our past as a unitary state, the two concepts should be distinguished. I think the US administration, Congress, and public opinion understood that such an approach does not destabilize the situation in the Soviet Union."

The White House almost did the impossible in order to stress that the Soviet Union and President Gorbachev remain its main partner. When the question of founding a Russian-American bank was discussed, Bush asked Yeltsin several times what the head of the Union thought about the idea. The US President approved the scheme only after explanations that "Gor-

America recognizes Russia for the second time

The first visit of the Russian President abroad repeats the success of 1924

bachev also approves it in principle" and that under the draft of the Union Treaty foreign policy is a joint concern of the central government and the republics.

Speaking in the Rose Garden with the smiling head of the Russian state standing beside him, President Bush said the United States was encouraged and inspired by President Yeltsin's dedication to democratic values and free market principles." We hope for joint work with him, he added. "At the same time," Bush said, "I want to make it clear to everyone, the United States will continue to maintain the closest possible official relations with the Soviet government headed by President Gorbachev."

It is believed here that the way to closer American-Russian cooperation has been paved by agreements between the Union and nine republics. National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, pointed out that Bush declared his readiness to cooperate with republics in the spheres that will come within their terms of reference under a new Union Treaty. "It is not so much a matter of the changed attitude of the United States," Scowcroft noted, "as of its reaction to the Soviet Union's evolution from a state in which republics were merely administrative functions to a situation in which they are real subjects and discuss with each other the form of preserving their union."

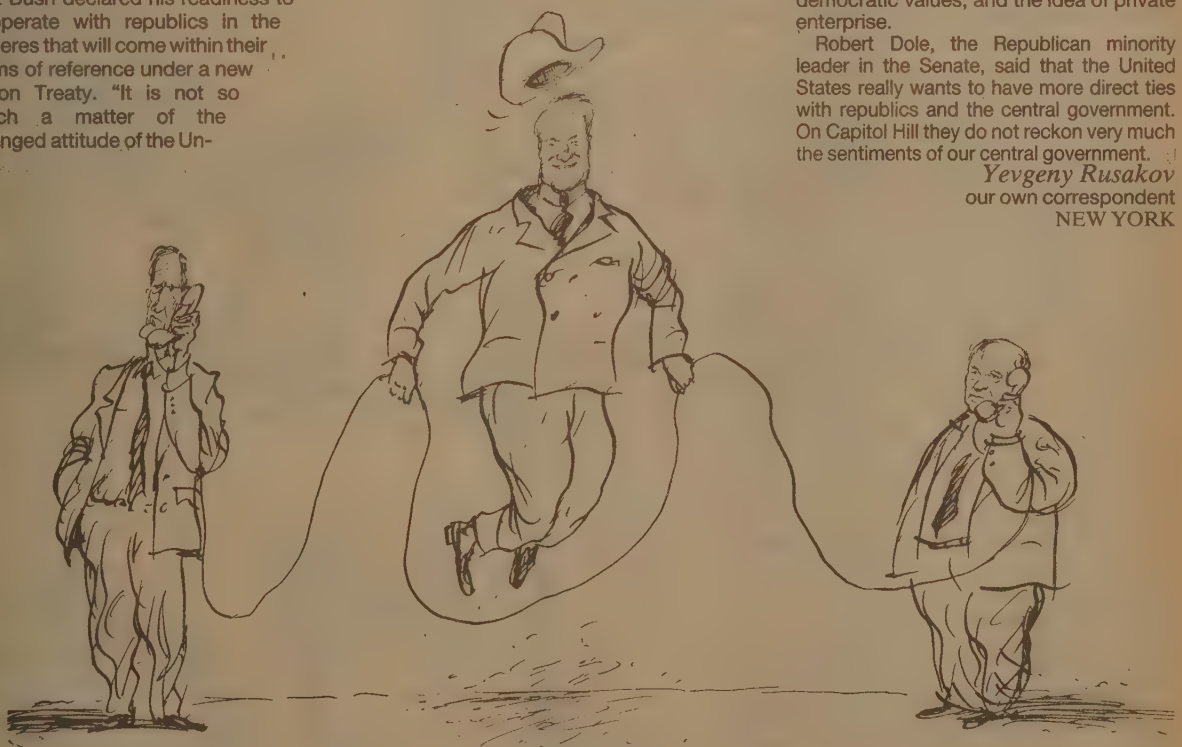
"What would you say about the statements of some of our conservatives who claim that the 'double-track' policy of the US administration which provides for the expansion of relations both with the centre and republics leads to the weakening and even break-down of the Soviet Union?" I asked Andrei Kozyrev.

"The besieged fortress psychology, suspicion, is still very strong in our country," Kozyrev said. "Some people simply need the sensation of an external threat, a foreign conspiracy. They find it difficult to justify their command positions and their privileges without a bugbear in the form of the United States. The Americans have sympathy for Russians, Russia, and the Soviet Union. They are not going to bury us. They are interested in a stable peace, in Russia, and in a Union with which they can cooperate. It was rather difficult to cooperate with the old Soviet Union, because it represented a threat in many respects. The Americans are tired of the feeling of danger. The idea that somebody is gradually weakening us is totally absurd," the minister concluded.

The sentiments on Capitol Hill were somewhat different from those in the White House. The Congress enthusiastically welcomed Boris Yeltsin as the first democratically elected head of state in the entire history of Russia. Senators and Representatives of different views, from liberal Bradley to right-wing conservative Helms, crowded round Yeltsin. The guest was presented with a cowboy hat, a leather belt, and a buckle with the name "Boris" engraved on it. The legislators listened with admiration to his statements about his dedication to the protection of human rights, democratic values, and the idea of private enterprise.

Robert Dole, the Republican minority leader in the Senate, said that the United States really wants to have more direct ties with republics and the central government. On Capitol Hill they do not reckon very much the sentiments of our central government.

Yevgeny Rusakov
our own correspondent
NEW YORK



Drawing by Igor Shein

Shall we use our last chance?

The only alternative we have left is that of the free market economy and a catastrophe

Leonid Vasilyev

Both those who still believe in socialism and those who swear by free enterprise, the supporters of Polozkov and the followers of Yeltsin – all of us, it seems, still have a chance of salvation. The progress of rapid disintegration has slowed down after the signing of the "9†1" agreement which outlined the contours of the Union of sovereign states. New and, of necessity, the most radical measures have been taken towards reforming the socialist regime which has discredited itself. Our President will go to London for the summit conference of the world's seven leading industrialized countries with an eye to seeking an agreement with the West on economic aid. In order to make the mission a success, thorough negotiations have been conducted, for several weeks now, with the West's leading professionals in the sphere of economic reforms.

All the current vectors add up to a new hope – namely, the hope that the President and his government are now prepared, almost a year after blocking a similar reform ("500 days"), to embark on still more radical ones. The hope for international aid has arisen.

Obviously, not everyone in this country regards this chance as a salvation. The precarious consensus may well be upset by the fierce pressure of the still powerful right-wing forces shouting about socialist values and patriotic education. To them, massive aid from the capitalist world – which will be rendered only if the conditions are created for privatization, free market, and free enterprise with all the rights, freedoms, privileges and guarantees which go with these institutions – may well appear as the undermining of their foundations and the sell-out of the Motherland. Therefore, it is important that we tell the truth, which is that we shall survive only if we resolutely opt for democratic values such as market, private property ownership, rights and freedoms including every condition necessary for the thriving of entrepreneurial activity and denationalization of the economy. It is also important to convince the people that this is not merely a way to which we have been forced and the only possible one for saving our country from collapse, but that this is the only true road to our nation's prosperity. Will the people believe us?

The crumbling of ideals and the crisis of faith

Much now depends on trust and on the mood of the people. We are facing a catastrophe, and this long ago ceased to be a metaphor, an element of political rhetoric. The catastrophe is manifested in the economy, in social relations, ethnic relations, in the sphere of culture

(actually in a low standard of culture), in the actions taken by the army and by repressive agencies and, last but not least, in politics. How to avoid the catastrophe? We must realize, first and foremost, what kind of catastrophe is threatening us. There has long been talk about the danger of civil war which is customarily considered to be the worst thing that can happen to a nation. But there will be no civil war. Not that there are no antagonistic social forces in the country, but we are lucky because these forces will never fight in earnest for their interests, let alone their ideals. After what we have gone through in the 20th century, we no longer have any faith. And where there is no faith, there is no enthusiasm. The people want peace. They want to survive somehow, and they are prepared to pay a high price for that. But the main trouble is that they do not know how to act.

The people see that we have reached an impasse. They have realized that it does not pay to carry on a life of a continuous self-sacrifice for the sake of a chimera, to die for remote ideals which will hardly come true. Many are prepared to reassess habitual values. But for all that, there is something beyond our powers, beyond ourselves. I mean, once again, the ideas inculcated in us for generations which have become an "alter ego" for most of us.

People are not free in our country. They have never been free inwardly – and this is the main form of human freedom. Most people have no confidence in their powers and are not accustomed to relying on themselves.

I am referring to the overwhelming majority of our people. They are no fanatics. They are ordinary people who would like to live well and to raise their children, but who have no chance of either making life better for themselves, or ensuring a bright future for their children. It would seem that they can easily see what's what. However, while rejecting socialism they are afraid of what they call capitalism. For fear of capitalism with its exploitation and unemployment, they turn back to socialism with its equality and the minimun state-guaranteed wage which encourages parasitic tendencies most of us have come to take for granted.

Here is another paradox. Our cinema-goers and TV-viewers see with their own eyes how the ordinary people – the "exploited workers" and even the unemployed – live in the West. Nevertheless, they believe the habitual words about exploitation which, they think, is nonexistent here. They fear unemployment which, they are sure, does not exist here but is common there... How can the people be convinced of what is only too obvious? I think this can be done by the traditional Russian "one-nail-drives-out-another" method. This is now happening under our very eyes and what can be described as the "Yeltsin phenomenon."

The Yeltsin phenomenon

Neither a political analyst, nor a professional sociologist can possibly bypass this phenomenon or fail to take a purely professional interest in it. What is the secret of Yeltsin's appeal? What's behind his charisma which compels many, practically without reasoning, to follow him and to support him in everything he does? His following is most heterogeneous: many of those who are pro-Yeltsin have no other sympathies in common.

There have been before and there are still, many charismatic leaders, from Stalin and Hitler to Hussain. These leaders' charisma, however, was based on a militant idea which instilled in people hatred for someone or something. This phenomenon is easily understandable and lends itself to explanation. But what about Yeltsin? He is neither a good public speaker, nor a militant; nor does he nurture fierce, infectious hatred for anyone, for a religious or any other idea. So what's his secret? People singled Yeltsin out when he started behaving differently from the others – from the powers-that-be, at any rate. One may ask what was so special about his behaviour, one may ask. As the head of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU, he persecuted dishonest Party bureaucrats. He stressed that he did not use the standard VIP privileges. Having come under fire from his Party "comrades-in-arms" at a plenary session, he neither faltered, nor budged.

People placed their faith in Yeltsin – that's word essential for understanding the phenomenon. And in the national Russian Orthodox tradition, Faith and Hope go together. So people started pinning their hopes on Yeltsin in keeping with this tradition. They came to regard him as the nation's only salvation. In other words, Yeltsin has given the people faith in and hope for salvation, for survival in the horrible mess that our life is today. And let us bear in mind that this is the faith and hope of those who have got used to believing in, and setting their hopes on others, not themselves.

It would be wrong to reproach our people for that. It would have been much better for all of them, of course, if they had been accustomed – as is the case in the developed democratic countries – to believing in the triumph of the law, in free speech, in human rights. But Russia has no democratic tradition – and the people are not to blame for it. And the people habitually believe. They are waiting for a miracle. They are waiting for those they believe in to work a wonder. And this sometimes makes the situation awkward for Yeltsin himself.

Yeltsin has withdrawn from the CPSU but avoids talking about socialism and, when faced with direct questions in this connection always answers in such a way that the people will understand: he wants the people to feel good and to live well. Many of his supporters still believe in socialism. Maybe with reservations, but they do!

It is not easy to overcome this faith. Therefore, in a situation where faith superimposes itself on faith (the faith in Yeltsin on the old faith in socialism or, more precisely, on the fear of the unknown market, of the loss of infinitesimal but guaranteed state supplies), we have to use precisely the factor of faith. If you believe in Yeltsin you have to believe in everything he is doing and will do. Just believe and ask no questions about socialism, let alone capitalism. Believe that Yeltsin will make your life better, and that it is for this purpose that he has mobilized Russia's best minds.

The Yavlinsky phenomenon

And now it is high time we started talking about our best brains. Those who are not burdened by complexes, not even ideological ones. These are the people who view the nation's future from a pragmatic angle and are in no way scared by either the word "capitalism" or the essence of the phenomena and structures behind the notion which is all too familiar to our ear. There are quite a few of these democratically-minded intellectuals in our country now. For the most part, they are people of the older generation, Yeltsin's contemporaries, who have gone through a lot and who know very well what's

Drawing by Igor Shein

what. Among these people, whom I hold in high esteem, I'd single out one, perhaps the youngest of them.

The Yeltsin phenomenon is basically an ideological one. The Yavlinsky phenomenon has taken shape on a different, pragmatic basis. He started out, and gained his national notoriety, as the author of the 500 Days reform. The reforms have never materialised as we know. Yavlinsky ostentatiously resigned then, but did not stop his activity. But since the disintegration of our economy continued and lived up to our experts' gloomiest forecasts (Yavlinsky's, above all), it is no wonder, therefore, that in the new stage of the crisis Yavlinsky himself became prominent among those who have got down to work on another series of radical reforms.

High intelligence, excellent education, and the indisputable qualification of a professional – all this is respectable and adds up to an image of an extraordinary personality of a still young man. I am not seeing him as a VIP – it is too early and inopportune to do that. But it is not by chance that what has been called our last chance at the beginning of the article is associated with Yavlinsky's name. He has worked out in detail the conditions and principles determining the enforcement of the plan for the world community's wide-ranging assistance to the crumbling Soviet Union. Yavlinsky's initiative and contribution are indisputable and generally recognized as such. His project – so far kept out from the public eye – is obvious: either our country legalizes a rigid system of norms and principles which would give scope to market relations, private property ownership, denationalization of the economy under reliable international control – or there will be no foreign aid for the simple reason that without the above mentioned conditions any aid as we know only too well, would be squandered away by no-one knows whom. Practically this means: there must either be a modern market economy, or nothing.

The President's new opportunities

I do not want to go back to analyzing the activity of the USSR President and of the blunders he has made. The President has done much for the nation and for the rest of the world. He is, in particular, accorded trust by the leaders of the top industrialized countries which have invited him to the G7 Summit in London and maintain our hopes for wide-ranging aid on their stiff terms. He has contributed to the achievement of the "9+1" agreement which has pushed the pendulum of our political life towards a consensus and, as a matter of fact, towards the left. This seems to be his greatest achievement, especially if the London Summit is a success and this opportunity is not missed. Subsequently, however, his chances will diminish, as likely as not. First of all, they may diminish in connection with the signing of the Union Treaty which will bring new elections for both the national parliament and the President. And second, his chances for international economic aid on Western terms will be lessened even if we do not miss that chance for salvation. In this case, the role of the CPSU will promptly be reduced to a minimum, the power base of the present President and General Secretary will crumble, and loyalty to the socialist choice will rule out the possibility of radical reforms in the country.

Nevertheless, there is no underrating Gorbachev who is strong with his political flair. He has already demonstrated, on more than one occasion, his ability to do a 180 degree turn aimed at keeping the balance between various forces. In any situation, he brilliantly finds the point of equilibrium. His personal commitment to the socialist choice – now obvious to all and deliberately emphasized – may recede to the shadows if politically necessary, and entirely new priorities may come to the fore. And then the situation will offer Gorbachev new opportunities and new room for political manoeuvring.

Is there any alternative to the "last chance"

The Yeltsin phenomenon gives rise to the hope that the socialist tendencies of the majority will be neutralized. The Yavlinsky pheomenon gives us hope that the last chance will not be missed and that the country will promptly change to a market system with the help of the world community. For want of an alternative, our President will have to lead this process. But I have not mentioned or, at any rate, considered in earnest the positions of those opposed, in principle, to the course now taking shape.

The prime force of the opposition is Polozkov's Party apparatus. Polozkov's party is actively supported by generals, and, partly, by the military-industrial complex. The President ought to be commended justice – he reins them in as best he can.

The weakness of the Polozkov party lies in the fact that all of them want to do no less than reverse the wheel of history, no less. And history does not go round in circles, even if forced to do so. People will no longer work under pressure, they have neither the faith, nor the enthusiasm, nor the ideals – and in our high-technology age the fear of repressions won't get you anywhere.

Those who are in power and who enjoy privilege won't give up their power and their privileges. This is only natural. They will never accept the road which will involve their losing their power and their privileges. This is also natural. But they ought to realize that the alternative they have to offer is the very disaster which the country is facing anyway.

There is another influential force in our country (I do not mean the ethnic outlying regions with their clearly pronounced nationalism – they deserve a special mention, and most of them are already renouncing their membership in the Union, anyway). These are the so-called patriots, jingoists, and related groups, political and otherwise). Apart from their extreme views, many of the ideas voiced by their ideologists could be accepted. One can share the disappointment of those who lament the ruined Russian countryside, the damage done to the environment, the shattered churches, the warped cityscape, etc. One can accept the prospect of Russianism going the same lines as Japanism which, while adhering to super-Westernization and superindustrialization by the capitalists adapted to the new realities of life without significantly changing its national culture.

So far so good. The weakness of nationalistic conservatism on our political scene is that it can not offer any alternative to our "last chance." You don't want a capitalist Russia? But why? Are you afraid of Russia losing its identity? But hasn't it been lost, to a still greater extent, almost irretrievably under socialism? And won't the changeover to a market economy be a greater guarantee for its revival than lamentations over the "Russian spirit" allegedly lost as a result of Russia's sell-out to capitalists? In a word, the "Russian patriots" have no alternative. Thus, we return to the main subject of our discussion. We have only one chance.

Does Gorbachev deserve the Nobel Peace Prize?

Alexei Kiva

Before Gorbachev's visit to Norway and Sweden I had to give interviews to several correspondents. They asked many questions, of course. The essence of the conversation can be reduced to the following:

Q. The Nobel Peace Prize is one of the most prestigious awards. Can you honestly say that Mikhail Gorbachev deserves it?

A. Gorbachev has done more to earn this prize than any other living statesman or politician. First, he has destroyed the foundations of Bolshevik totalitarianism, the last empire in the world. Many countries were especially threatened by this empire. One can mention the occupation of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, the threat to Poland in the late 1970s and early 1980s and interference in the domestic affairs of many countries, such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique. I think, Ronald Reagan had some grounds to talk about the "evil empire." That empire does not exist anymore.

Second, Gorbachev has advanced the concept of new thinking. The realization of this concept has brought about momentous positive changes in the world. The regimes of barrack-type socialism, which typically worked not for but against their citizens, have collapsed, and the USSR has made no attempt to save them as it did before. Peace in Europe would have no chance at stability without the unification of the Germanys.

Third, relations between the Soviet Union and the United States have changed radically from confrontation to partnership. This has made it possible to revise the military doctrine, to begin the reduction of armaments and armed forces and to lay foundations for an entirely new world situation.

Q. And what about the shooting of people in Georgia and in the Baltic republics?

A. Just imagine the collapse of all three models of our reality: the totalitarian social system, the imperial alliance and the superpower which relied on satellite countries in Eastern Europe and had its outposts in the form of socialist-oriented countries. Incidentally, the satellite regimes have collapsed, too. They do not torment their citizens any longer. The fabric of our former existence has actually been torn. Such a situation is very favourable for the seizure of power by a dictator. Gorbachev should be given much credit for preventing dictatorship.

Q. Why didn't Gorbachev punish those who are guilty of the blood shed in Georgia, the Baltic republics and other regions?

A. I would be the first to reproach Gorbachev as a politician if he began to complicate his relations with the army, the KGB and the Interior Ministry. If perestroika fails, the loss of human lives will be calculated not in dozens or hundreds, but in hundreds of thousands and possibly millions. A politician must keep his head and soberly weigh his options and the alignment of forces at each given stage.

> Reformers have an unenviable fate. Neither the right nor the left consider them their own. Only time does them justice

Q. Nevertheless, the Baltic republics doubt the expediency of awarding the Nobel Prize to Gorbachev.

A. During meetings with officials of the Baltic republics, I told them, and I am ready to repeat it once again, that by acting selfishly and thinking only about their own interests, they take no less of a risk than we do. The Baltic republics were already outside the Soviet Union, but then they lost their independence. If perestroika were to fail, their independence would be crushed immediately and no one would come to their aid. The same is true of Georgia and Armenia. Thus it is far more reasonable for them to find a way out of the crisis together, in an amicable way, taking mutual interests into account.

* * *

After the signing of a new treaty of Union, the old structures of power must resign. True, it is not yet known whether or not they will resist. The question of electing a new president of the country will be on the agenda. In my opinion, the only way Gorbachev will gain strong positions in the struggle for re-election is by establishing closer ties with democrats, relying on sovereign republics and boldly carrying out radical reforms.

Did Gorbachev make mistakes? Certainly he did. First of all, he did not see soon enough that the edifice of barrack-type socialism had rotted through. The social and economic system, social relations, and "the unbreakable union of free republics" have rotted through. The spiritual life of the people is at its lowest.

Reformers like Mikhail Gorbachev have an unenviable fate. They carry a terribly heavy burden on their shoulders. There are many ups and downs along their road, already a twisting and slippery one. In our case the road from totalitarianism to democracy equals an historical period, even an epoch. Neither the right nor the left consider reformers to be their kind of people. Each social force has its own logic of development and wants to go all the way, even to a precipice. Being essentially a centrist (left or right), a reformer hinders such a course of events. If reforms are wrecked, the regime and its leader suffer a defeat. If they are carried out steadily, they release forces which must logically remove the reformer himself from the political scene.

The agreement reached between nine constituent republics of the Soviet Union and its central government, the 9+1 formula, can become a victory for our peoples and our state. But will it become a victory for Gorbachev personally? Is it fair that a reformer can sign a sentence to himself as the leader of a state? Who said that history develops rationally and in accordance with the laws of justice? If a reformer does not keep up the pace and is no longer able to stay abreast with the times, he can save himself by leaving the scene. In either case history later puts him on a pedestal. ■

EAST – WEST

Back to Paris, forward to Europe

Galina Sidorova,
NT political analyst

The Soviet military has been busy inventing ghost tanks and new threats. The diplomats, however, have managed to sort things out

Last autumn's conference of foreign ministers of European countries, the United States, and Canada, which took place during the UN General Assembly session in New York, was the dress rehearsal for the foreign ministers' conference recently convened in Berlin. After the ministers made introductory speeches, guests and journalists were asked to leave the conference hall and an informal exchange of opinions was opened. The chairman of the conference, the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, invited first speakers. No one volunteered to take the floor. After the pause had become too long, the Norwegian said he would close the session if no one had anything to say. Like an excellent schoolboy, James Baker pressed the microphone button by his side, but the microphone was out of order. While service personnel fussed about the mike, the Secretary of State came to the rostrum and started the discussion.

35 again

In Berlin the ministers were prepared to improvise. After a short open sitting which admitted Albania to the CSCE membership, making the number of CSCE members 35 again, the ministers started a routine agenda discussion. The agenda included such items as the new architecture of Europe; coordination between the common European process and the existing European and trans-Atlantic institutions – the European Community, the Council of Europe, NATO, and West European Alliance; and the dynamics of social and economic change on the continent. They adopted the procedure of peaceful settlement of disputes which stipulated the mandatory participation of a third party, and discussed the situation in Yugoslavia on Belgrade's request.

The most difficult issue may easily have been the question of the mechanism for consultation and cooperation with regard to emergency situations. The Soviet Union was especially concerned about two aspects: the definition of an emergency situation and the ways to avoid interference in the internal affairs.

In the past such sensitive issues could only make some states sour. This time, however, a compromise solution was reached during a working lunch on Bessmertnykh's initiative: the preamble of the mechanism for consultation and cooperation with regard to emergency situations includes the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs.

If any participating state concludes that an emergency situation is developing, it may seek clarification from the state or states involved. The requested state or states will provide within 48 hours all relevant information. Should the situation remain unresolved, any of the states involved may address to the Chairman-in-Office of the Committee of Senior Officials a request that an emergency meeting of the Committee be held. As soon as 12 or more participating states have seconded the request within a maximum period of 48 hours the meeting will be held. In the light of its assessment of the situation, the meeting may agree on recommendations or conclusions to arrive at a solution. It may also decide to convene a meeting at ministerial level.

Today the 35 ministers are as close in their assessments of the developments on the continent as they have never been before. There are two sensitive areas left for the Soviet diplomacy: the relations with NATO and the problem of combining national, international, and common European interests in foreign and domestic policies. This sensitivity is first and foremost explained by the political strife inside the USSR: interethnic frictions, complicated relations between the centre and the republics and between the centre and potentially independent states like the Baltics.

First, about NATO, the problem that was for a while overshadowed by the unification of Germany but is now aquiring a new quality and dimension.

New Times. Is the position of active non-acceptance of NATO as an obsolete structure a psychological, rather than realistic one? Are you always concerned about the Soviet conservatives' possible

reaction to the changes in this country's traditional approaches?

A.Bessmertnykh. We have ties with NATO. We are in favor of NATO becoming a political, rather than military structure. What we can not accept is the concept according to which NATO is regarded as the cornerstone of European stability. NATO was established during the years of the Cold War and has since been a military political organization of twelve countries. We have entered a transition period of reorganization of Europe. Under these conditions it is impossible to demand the elimination of all organizations existing in Europe. This applies especially to viable organizations like the Council of Europe, the European Community, the European Parliament and NATO. Unlike our Western partners, however, we believe that NATO is a transitional structure. Even if it is transformed into a political organization, it will not be able to become the foundation of the common European process. What makes me think so? I believe that the institutions we are talking about are a product of only one part of Europe, they are trusted by only one part of Europe. To make Europe united again all peoples, countries, and leaders of Europe must be united by common European ideas generated by the European process. Big Europe has a chance to reorganize itself. With a grouping of states being in its centre, will a united Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals ever be possible?

NT. What if NATO expands?

A.B. Then it will not be the NATO we know. I think it highly probable that NATO may be transformed into some new structure. We would support such a transformation. So far, however, NATO military planners continue to consider problems of nuclear strategy. Nothing has changed in this respect. A number of Western countries cannot leave NATO because NATO provides their security. I know that some East European countries are gravitating towards NATO. I would say, though, that Eastern Europe's pro-NATO tendencies are a kind of protest. NATO does not want to admit East European countries. Nonetheless, NATO cannot be the centre and the common European process cannot be a supplement to NATO. We do not have a psychological rejection of NATO. The public opinion in this country is begining to understand that as realists we must see Europe the way it is and the way it must be. These two aspects must be somehow accommodated in an acceptable combination... We maintain a dialogue with NATO on political and military levels. The Soviet foreign minister has been invited to visit NATO once again...

Marrying NATO?

As far as I understand, the NATO leadership wants to meet the Soviet president as well. Actually, NATO is offering many cooperation projects to the Soviet Union in the political and military spheres, and more importantly, in the spheres of ecology and reconversion. By the way, spending on the civilian sector now accounts for nearly a half of NATO's budget. However, the dialogue with the NATO leadership continues to be too slow and cautious. Today NATO's interest in this country is greater than the Soviet readiness to respond to it.

Moscow seems to be turning a blind eye to the changes underway in NATO: the upcoming halving of armed forces, a special programme of contacts with the Soviet Union and East European states. Soviet politicians continue to prefer to keep away from NATO, guided by the familiar principle: the people will not accept a rapprochement with NATO. However, Soviet generals have of late become frequent guests at NATO, they are shown and told many things about NATO during these trips. When they return home, they say they saw something extraordinary there, and insist that this country's defence industry receive additional allocations.

One may express indignation and refer to all kinds of threats as long as one wishes. However, one must also be realistic and see that it was East Germans who fled to the West; it was the Comecon that died, not the Common Market; it is the Warsaw Pact, not NATO that is going to die on July 1 at the last sitting of the Political Consultative Committee, which will be attended by the Soviet vice-president who usually attends all funerals. Besides, the Warsaw Pact did not die on the battlefield fighting NATO, but its demise was instead a logical result of the economic, ideological, and political bankruptcy of the system that created it. Speaking of values, the NATO of today stands for the values we claim to advocate – economic freedom, democracy, respect for human rights. The vitality of some European structures and the demise of others is an indication of which part of Europe is on the way back to civilization. We are going to join them, not vice versa.

Meanwhile, if we really want NATO to become a new common European structure, it would be logical to step up cooperation with it. The Soviet Union should discuss the possibility of joining NATO as it has already done with respect to

Bessmertnykh and Baker: inches away from the START Treaty

Selling Warsaw Pact insignia at a Berlin flea market

other common European institutions. In my opinion, it would be unwise and uneconomical to create a new security structure for Europe without using the existing infrastructure and capabilities of NATO. As for the Warsaw Pact, it would be wise to turn the last sitting of the Political Consultative Committee from a burial rite to the beginning of new relations with our East European neighbours.

Now, about the interference in internal affairs.

The adoption of the concept of shared human values narrows the sphere of domestic or internal affairs. In my opinion, this is the natural process of development of a new Europe and a new world order. The problem is that we are lagging behind the West. The West is already through the painful process of the formulation and settlement of mutual claims, economic adjustment, and learning the art of the cohabitation of rich and poorer nations. They have already voluntarily surrendered part of their economic and political sovereignty to European integration and are now enjoying the fruits of this integration. EC ministers meet nearly every week and are in constant contact with each other. Naturally, European integration meets with problems as well. But the West has mechanisms for solving problems. As for us, we are only entering the stage of the struggle of sovereignties, ethnic ambitions, nationalism as reaction to decades of suppression of national traditions and independence disguised as internationalism. This applies both to our relations with former allies and to domestic relations between the centre and newly independent republics. It is impossible to skip this dramatic period. The prosperous Western Europe will have to live through this period along with us. Otherwise the degree of integration which Western Europe has already achieved and which is necessary for a new Europe will never be attainable.

Back to the Shevardnadze line

As perestroika matures and this country returns to the civilized world, ideology is disappearing from interstate relations. There is a struggle of ideas and opinions inside the country, which is only natural for a democracy. The conservative pro-military lobby still refuses to accept this course of events and keeps trying to reverse it. Their activity has already ruined the opportunities offered by last November's Paris summit and has dealt a heavy blow to the entire European process.

The Soviet military have first bogged down the CFE treaty in arithmetical details, thus delaying its ratification for half a year, and then nearly crippled the final efforts connected with the START treaty, freezing this country's relations with Western Europe and the United States. Soviet tanks and combat aircraft were transferred to different branches and services to avoid reductions, and armaments were redeployed behind the Urals to keep them out or Europe. After the signing of the CFE Treaty, the Soviet military provided incorrect information about Soviet armaments which reflected the anticipated rather than the actual state of affairs, it misrepresented the number of military facilities earmarked for international control, and allowed itself a very liberal interpretation of the figures specified at the talks. The Soviet military was busy looking for juridical loopholes to avoid the implementation of the treaty. As a result, after a six-month delay, things returned to the previous norm. All disputed moments were removed, this time on terms much less favourable for the Soviet Union.

We are returning to our starting place in order to move forward – we are returning to the Shevardnadze line in foreign policy.

Hence the furious and clumsy attacks on Shevardnadze and the political course he pursued as foreign minister and continues to pursue now as an independent politician. Pseudopatriotic attacks are manifestations of the system's deepening agony.

Once allowed by the president to attack this country's foreign policy, the hard-liners are now levelling their fury at Gorbachev himself. The President has to double his efforts to repel conservative attacks coming from the Soviet parliament which has moved considerably to the right in its attitudes.

Alexander Bessmertnykh's expert diplomacy, Eduard Shevardnadze's triumphant lecture tour of Western Europe and America, Mikhail Gorbachev's preparations for the meeting of the Group of Seven in London – all these factors promote the national interests of this country, restore its international image, and facilitate the solution of complicated domestic problems.

BERLIN–MOSCOW

Photos by author and TASS

Nuclear weapons:

too dangerous to be treated lightly

Igor Andryushin, Yuri Trutnev, Alexander Chernyshev

Should the Soviet Union stop nuclear testing? The official stance is that a nuclear testing moratorium must be a bilateral superpower step. The opponents of nuclear tests demand an immediate halt to all testing. What do people who create nukes think?

Igor Andryushin, laboratory chief at the All-Union Research Institute of Experimental Physics (VNIIEF)

Yuri Trutnev, first deputy scientific supervisor at the VNIIEF, Hero of Socialist labour, Laureate of Lenin and State Prizes of the USSR, corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences

Alexander Chernyshev, department head at the VNIIEF, Laureate of the State Prize of the USSR

The problem of halting or continuing nuclear testing in the Soviet Union must not be considered separately from other problems. This problem is only part of the broader problem of nuclear weapons. The history of the problem begins in the mid-1940s, when the United States acquired nuclear weapons and laid waste to the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thus confirming its preparedness to use nuclear arms to contain Communism and to establish an American world order. Strategists in the United States worked out plans for nuclear attacks against dozens of Soviet cities in various republics which constituted a direct threat to the lives of millions of people and in practice meant the total destruction of this country.

The Soviet Union was faced with a choice. It could either accept the American terms, including the transformation of political and economic systems, rejection of the struggle for world political hegemony (actually, rejection of the idea of building a global socialist system) and disarmament. Or the Soviet Union could create a nuclear potential of its own, thus making it impossible for the United States to unleash military aggression against the Soviet Union for fear of retaliation.

The Soviet leadership chose the latter option. By 1949, the Soviet Union had developed and tested the first Soviet A-bomb, by 1953 the first H-Bomb, and by 1955 the nuclear charge that was the prototype of the Soviet Union's modern thermonuclear weapons. Serial production of nuclear weapons began and strategic delivery vehicles were developed.

The dawn of the nuclear age

The epoch of Soviet–American nuclear confrontation, of superpowers wrestling for world domination, of the race for an American or a Communist world began. In this struggle each side had to reckon with the interests of its opponent and to avoid direct confrontation, despite constant bilateral tensions, threats and pressure.

The United States failed to remain the world's military and political leader. Moreover, the emergence of nuclear arms resulted in an unprecedented situation in which the United States became vulnerable to the military might of another country. This turn of events was viewed as unacceptable for the United States. Washington tried to find real opportunities to devalue the Soviet nuclear potential, either by building strategic weapons that could guarantee a first-strike obliteration of the USSR, or by developing a reliable defence system capable of neutralizing the Soviet retaliation attack, or by combining the two approaches.

The Soviet Union has never possessed capabilities for a pre-emptive first strike at the United States, it does not possess such capabilities now and will not possess them in future. The Soviet military and technological efforts have always been aimed at countering a possible first strike from America and safeguarding retaliation capabilities. This has resulted in tremendous quantitative growth of the nuclear arsenals. The massive nuclear build-up was necessary because if the enemy's first strike was capable of eliminating up to 90 percent of Soviet strategic systems, the necessary retaliation arsenal must be ten times as large as the hostile one in order to safeguard guaranteed retaliation.

Although the Soviet-American confrontation is much less acute now, there remains the danger of the emergence of new fundamental differences connected first and foremost with the demographic boom, exhaustion of natural resources, shortages of food, ecological crisis and spiritual degradation. The overwhelming majority of people in the world are living in conditions which can hardly be identified as fitting for a human being. There is a gigantic gap between the rich nations and the poor ones. Historical experience tells us that such situations have always generated the desire to reshape the world in favour of a more even distribution of wealth – as a result, such situations usually escalated into war. In the current situation, it is easy to predict the necessity to preserve the military potential of developed Western countries and those countries' desire to place the military resources of other nations under rigid control.

The defence complex of the USSR is faced with complicated problems in connection with the quantitative reduction of strategic armaments within the framework of the new policy of weakening and removing the Soviet-American confrontation. International trust is growing and new political mechanisms of security as the key element of the new world order are being created. Reduction of armaments is being carried out within the framework of these processes. At the same time,

parallel with the reduction of strategic armaments (and technical and technological improvement of American first-strike weapons and anti-missile defence systems), the retaliation capabilities are weakening, deterrence is becoming less reliable, and favourable conditions are appearing for a surprise nuclear attack.

As a result, a dangerous situation may develop, in which the old mechanism of peace by force will stop working, while the new mechanism of peace through peaceful policies will not yet be in effect. That is why the implementation of disarmament schemes requires both political determination and great caution.

The superpower status

As a source of formidable military power, giving a state a very special status (actually, despite the dramatic political, social and economic crises, the Soviet Union remains a military and political superpower) nuclear weapons impose special responsibility on the state vis-a-vis the world community and its own people. The state must be strong and responsible in order to keep the situation in the country and in the country's nuclear complex under control. Nuclear weapons can become a source of horrible tragedies.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the development of each new type of nuclear weapon is an absolutely concrete technological challenge, and that different types of nuclear charges may differ from one another like different means of transportation, for instance.

The processes going on in a nuclear charge are so complicated that the existing scientific and technological base for the development of nuclear weapons is insufficient to guarantee the reliable functioning of the charges. The manufactured nuclear charges must be selectively tested at special testing ranges. After the test findings have been analysed, the tested prototype can either be sanctioned for serial production, or sent for further development, which happens often.

In a number of instances nuclear tests supply information which is very important for other types of nuclear charges, including the already operational ones, and such information may require that urgent measures be taken. Some operational charges are additionally tested in different kinds of nuclear tests. A separate group of nuclear tests is connected with the issues of nuclear safety and measures to enhance that safety. Additional complicated problems appear and are solved with the use of special nuclear tests during the course of the development of hardened weapon systems possessing greater survival potential.

Nuclear testing is an organic technological element in the process of development, modernization and maintenance of the Soviet nuclear potential. If nuclear testing is halted, we will not be able to carry out the necessary study of the existing nuclear arsenal, in particular, to study that arsenal's survival capabilities, and to carry out similar research aimed at development of various types of military hardware. A halt to nuclear testing makes it impossible to directly check the functioning of nuclear charges in the conditions of constant changes in the technology of the production of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials, and to modernize the existing nuclear weapons systems in order to enhance nuclear weapons safety. All this is fraught with the danger of the Soviet nuclear arsenal losing its deterring capabilities.

Drawing by Leonid Tishkov

Between the two chairs?

Soviet nuclear testing was primarily conducted at two special testing ranges of the Ministry of Defence of the USSR: the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing range in Kazakhstan and the Northern nuclear Testing range in the Novaya Zemlya Archipelago in the Arctic. Initially (until 1963) the Soviet Union carried out atmospheric and sometimes ground nuclear blasts. Since 1963 all Soviet nuclear tests have been carried out underground.

The choice of a testing range and the ways of using it imposes a special responsibility on the users even in the case of underground tests, if the testing range is situated close to populated areas. In this respect, the location of the Semipalatinsk range is preferable, although its performance is hampered by the seasonal character of operations. Evidently, it is impossible to carry out some important kinds of tests there. The right solution seems to be to carry out regular tests at the Novaya Zemlya range and low-yield tests at the

Semipalatinsk range, and to introduce a system of privileges and compensation for people whose lives are in any way affected by the functioning of the nuclear testing ranges.

In the past few years, the normal course of work in the Soviet nuclear complex has been disrupted. Nuclear tests have not been carried out for well-known reasons. It is necessary to decide in principle whether the Soviet Union will remain a nuclear power or will start unilateral nuclear disarmament. If the choice is made in favour of the nuclear status, then it becomes necessary to provide elementary conditions for normal work and to solve the problem of nuclear testing. Nuclear weapons are too dangerous to be treated lightly.

A moratorium for peace?

The issue of nuclear testing, as well as other problems relating to nuclear weapons, is heavily influenced by political considerations. It is maintained that the leading powers' halt to nuclear testing will become an important barrier to possible nuclear proliferation, while the continuation of nuclear testing will help increase the number of Nuclear Club members and undermine security. The emergence of nuclear weapons in the Third World would greatly harm international stability and security. However, each state is independent in choosing whether to become a nuclear power or not. The Soviet Union's continuing (or refraining from) nuclear testing has nothing to do with this problem.

Besides the political decision, a state needs a bank of scientific and technological data and special materials to start developing its own nuclear potential. The relevant data and a bank of scientific and technological data and special materials to start developing its own nuclear potential. The relevant data and the necessary materials can either be developed by the state itself, or purchased from some other party. In a number of cases primitive but devastating types of nuclear weapons can be developed without any tests, especially if the relevant technology is purchased from abroad.

It is also argued that a halt to nuclear testing will freeze the existing military and technological balance and will make it impossible to develop new destabilizing weapon systems. However, the objectives of nuclear tests are as follows: greater reliability of the existing nuclear weapons, study of nuclear charges' performance in extraordinary situations, enhancing the safety of nuclear charges and making nuclear weapons less vulnerable to the pre-emptive attack and the hostile anti-missile defence. All these objectives are aimed at promoting the stability, security and safety of weapons systems and have nothing in common with the cretion of destabilizing weapon systems. It is necessary to have a clear understanding that perfection of nuclear arms proper cannot upset the balance of forces or create decisive and qualitatively new military and scientific prerequisites for nuclear domination.

As for the really destabilizing activities, these include the development of new non-nuclear technologies, highly accurate first-strike weapon systems, space-based strategic armaments and SDI research. In this respect we are especially worried about the deployment of highly accurate first-strike Trident-2 missiles on board US submarines. We cannot see why the finalized draft of the START Treaty allows large-scale deployment of this destabilizing weapon system in the United States Navy.

Opponents of nuclear testing say that the final moratorium on nuclear testing will, in the long run, make the first-strike forces less reliable and effective and will thus promote international security. We would agree with this if the matter were a comprehensive, not unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. It must also be borne in mind that strategic parity will also be upset if one side's arsenal is prepared for deep conservation for a long period of time, and the other side's arsenal is not; or if the sides have different capabilities for freezing nuclear weapons technologies and monitoring nuclear weapons production; or if the sides have different information about the performance of nuclear charges in different circumstances. One must also bear in mind that nuclear testing is more important for the Soviet Union than the United States, because the Soviet Union lags behind the USA technologically, and Soviet-made computers are less capable. It is also important to note that the leaders of the United States have stated repeatedly that nuclear tests are necessary for the maintenance of the US nuclear arsenals and will be continued.

Thou shall not make thee any threat

The nuclear arms race has resulted in such a degree of Soviet and American nuclear weapons accumulation that the potential threat of the nuclear arsenals' use now concerns everyone. Hence the fundamental problem of radical reduction of the total number of nuclear weapons while maintaining strategic parity on a much lower level. In other words, it is necessary to reduce nuclear weapons in such a way that it will become possible on the one hand to remove the potential threat of global elilmination, and on the other hand, to preserve a sufficient retaliation potential.

It is necessary for the Soviet Union to join efforts with the United States in solving this task. Simple arithmetical reduction of the existing arsenals, for example by 10 or 50 times, does not help solve the problem, because it will inevitably enhance the effectiveness of the first strike and thus will destabilize the situation. The very structure of nuclear arsenals will have to be seriously changed to avoid this. New nuclear tests will be needed to make this process feasible.

It would be great to live in a world with no wars or weapons. However, in this nuclear and highly militarized world the Soviet Union will be vulnerable to forceful pressure and claims for its territory, natural resources and way of life. It is necessary to see clearly that even if it voluntarily sheds its nuclear superpower status, the Soviet Union will have to provide guarantees, including material guarantees that its nuclear arsenal cannot be restored. This may result in the imposition of rigid international control over this country (even with the use of special military troops).

We believe that there is no need to hasten to reject the time-tested means of deterrence that has allowed us to live in peace for so long. Unilateral nuclear disarmament is not in the interests of the Soviet Union or the international community. It is easy to foresee the results of nuclear powers' forceful pressure on the non-nuclear Soviet Union gripped by economic and ethnic crisis. It is easy to foresee that the United States will establish its political and military hegemony in the world immediately after the Soviet Union will have dismantled its nuclear potential. The process of disarmament is necessary as a way to a new secure world, but this process must be multilateral and gradual. The Soviet nuclear military complex which has taken decades to create is the property of the whole nation, of all the republics and peoples of this country which have contributed to its creation. We must be extremely careful to avoid this complex's involvement in the maelstrom of domestic conflicts. ■

A Teheran misunderstanding

I would be highly upset if these notes offended my Iranian hosts. After all it was the Iranian embassy that invited a group of Soviet journalists, myself included, to attend the ceremonies marking the second anniversary of the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

...Shortly before I was to return to Moscow, one of my Iranian hosts told me there had been a misunderstanding. He pointed at one line in the ID cards we carried and said that the cards' bearers, as journalists, had the right to receive various information (the card was in Farsi and when we learned about our right to information, it was already too late. However, we would not have been able to exercise our right without our hosts' help, even if we had known about it earlier). The man also said Soviet journalists had been entitled to share the hotel with our foreign colleagues enjoying press releases, a professional programme, etc., but due to a misunderstanding we were denied all these benefits, for which our Iranian host was profoundly sorry.

In fact, when we arrived in Teheran, we were told we would be staying at the same hotel as our foreign colleagues, but then something must have happened and as a result the six of us had no choice but to fuss about pleading for interviews. If it were impossible to interview the spiritual leader of the country, or the president, OK, we would settle for a minister. If all ministers were too busy, we would speak to a municipal officer – anyone who could answer our questions. The hosts patiently listened to our requests and promised to convey them to the decision-makers. At the end, it turned out that a "misunderstanding" had happened and our activity in Iran was reduced to attendance at the mourning ceremonies, tours of the Shah's palaces, and walks about the city...

An attempt to answer questions not asked in an interview that never took place

Why this preamble? Having no information from the officials, we had to gather it in other ways. Hence, possible variant reading. A "misunderstanding" is to blame.

"...What country are you from?" Two jet-black eyes betrayed interest. "Ah, so you are from Russia... Right, so long then." The voice had no trace of hostility or aggressiveness. This split-second conversation took place in the midst of a thousands-strong pack of people who had

just chanted "Death to Russia! Death to America!" The chanting was repeated several times with escalating passion, accompanied by the rhythmic dull banging of fists against chests, which made the entire scene even more macabre. "Death to America! Death to Russia!" The massive rally was waiting for the address from the country's spiritual leader Sayed Ali Khamenei to the Muslim believers gathered to pay homage to Khomeini's memory. (Just as we were going to leave the hotel for the ceremony, the Iranian authorities instructed us to leave all cameras, dictophones, notebooks, pens, pencils, wristwatches, and rings at the hotel for our personal security. Later we were to undergo a double searching session, during which a security guard found my last two tablets of painkiller and demanded that I throw them out. I tried to explain the tablets were medicine, not poison and even volunteered to swallow them, and the guard waved me trough. The guards confiscated a pack of cigarettes from a colleague and after the meeting he had to stand in line at the small wagon where confiscated items were kept.) Before the Khamenei address devoted to the memory of the late Imam, the floor was given to Muslims representing various countries. Some of them concluded their speeches with a battle cry "Death to America! Death to Russia!" which the audience eagerly chanted.

Was it a token of tradition? I would like to ask this question during an official interview, but I have to answer it myself. The Khamenei address contained nothing like this, which was very indicative of changes in Iran's policies. In another more lengthy address to hundreds of thousands of Muslims gathered to pay tribute to the late Imam inside and outside the grandiouse mausoleum – the Beheshti-Sahra Mosque – the spiritual leader of Iran used other words, and according to the newspaper *Kayhan* confined himself to condemning "the arrogant powers." The mausoleum, capped with a huge gilded dome and surrounded by minarets, produces a lasting impression. Built in less than two years the gigantic structure can accommodate up to 50,000 worshippers and includes a library and religious schools. The complex is situated in a desert just outside of Teheran and it takes about fifteen minutes to get there by helicopter from the Teheran International Airport.

The call of the spiritual leader of Iran rang out under the magnificent vaults of the mausoleum: Let the Iranian nation remain united and not lose patience. Then Khamenei said: many falsely claim to be supporters of human rights and Islam, but they are all lying, their version of Islam is the one that suits the interest of the oppressors (wouldn't it be interesting to know more about this?). Even more interesting thoughts followed: the whole world, the oppressed, the Muslims and the oppressors have come to realize that the nucleus of Islamic movements is the Islamic Republic. As long as the Zionist regime continues massacring the Palestinians and as long as Muslims throughout the world, in Persian Gulf region, Iraq in particular are directly or indirectly harassed and pressed by the policies of the US administration, there will be no good intentions towards the US.

I would like to clarify what is implied by the words "Iraq in particular." The relations between Teheran and Baghdad soured immediately after the end of the last Gulf war, as a result of the Shiite uprising in southern Iraq (Iran is a Shiite state). Armed clashes started occurring in the border areas and as many troops as a batallion sometimes participated in border skirmishes. Teheran made grave accusations against the Saddam Hussein regime. Mourning was declared in Teheran after the massive killings of Shiite rebels and the desecration of Shiite shrines in Basrah, Najaf, and Kerbela. Demands for Saddam's death could be heard during the traditional Friday prayers, and one of the members of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran said: "The days of the Baath regime in Baghdad are numbered and soon Saddam will find the place in hell he deserves."

Meanwhile, Iran has not yet healed its wounds from the long and devastating war unleashed by the Saddam Hussein regime. "I was shocked to observe the havoc in Iran's western provinces wreaked by the Iraqi attacks during the eight-year war," said the head of a UN fact-finding mission who had just toured the Iran-Iraq border areas. According to the UN representative, Iraqi occupiers laid mines all over the areas, even at children's playgrounds. So far the mine-sweeping effort has been complicated by the Iraqi refusal to supply maps of the minefields. The cost of the total damage inflicted on Iran during the war exceeds $600 billion, according to Iranian calculations. Counting in also indirect losses, the sum of the damage may run into a trillion dollars.

What about the consequences of Saddam's latest adventure for Iran? The 2.5 million army of Aghan refugees has been complemented by over one million refugees from Iraq. Reportedly, Teheran spends as much as $15 million a day on refugee relief. The country which did not take part in the recent Gulf war has become a victim of that war's catastrophic ecological consequences. The World Health Organization has already warned people living in southern Iran not to drink rain water: analyses revealed that it contained soot, lead, and cancerogenic benzopyrene.

"Death to America! Death to Russia!"

Despite all these problems, however, President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani refrains from openly bellicose gestures vis-à-vis Baghdad. Evidently he understands that the country will not withstand additional socio-economic strain and that Iran does not have the resources to set up and sponsor a Shiite-Kurdish regime in Iraq. Besides, the anti-Saddam opposition is not homogeneous, either: some segments thereof advocate pro-Arab rather than pro-Persian attitudes, and even during the war in the Gulf many Shiites chose to participate in combat against the anti-Saddam coalition instead of escaping to the neighbouring Iran.

Another enigma is the massive escape to the Islamic Republic of Iraqui air force planes. So far the situation has remained obscure. Was there some sort of an agreement between the two countries? Exactly how many planes landed? The West says there were 148 Iraqi planes, but Iran argues that the number was not more than 22. Some Iraqi pilots are known to have remained in Iran. Iran recognizes the planes as Iraqi property, and states that the negotiations on the return of the planes to Iraq can only begin under certain conditions. Which conditions might these be?

Wouldn't it be interesting to discuss these things with official representatives of Iran? Unfortunately, I can only refer to Western sources. For example, the Paris-based *Le Nouvel Observateur* concludes that Tehran's reaction to the massacre of Shiite rebels in Iraq was very restrained, which may be a sign that the Islamic revolution unleashed by Imam Khomeini is almost over. Khomeini's attempts at exporting the Islamic revolution were futile, in particular his calls for a rebellion issued to the Iraqi Shiites during the eight-year war. Now when the Shiites went into rebellion following Baghdad's bitter defeat in the Gulf war, Teheran showed that it was much more concerned with domestic problems. Analysing Teheran's latest political steps, *The Guardian* writes that these are confirmations of two earlier suppositions about Rafsanjani. The first one was that Rafsanjani would want to restore Iran's image as a respected member of the international community, and to resume relations with the West and the Arab world by removing the stigma of religious fanaticism from Iran, and by dropping the ideas and methods of the Khomeini revolution if they conflicted with the national interests of Iran. The other supposition was that Rafsanjani would have to display much patience and finesse in order to overcome the resistance of Khomeini's powerful heirs.

In the obligatory dress – hidjab

The necessary manoeuvering resulted in numerous contradictory statements by Rafsanjani. At the end of the 1980s he condemned "the crude aspects of Iran's foreign policy" which "only bred more enemies," yet shortly after that he advised the Palestinians to avenge each Palestinian victim by "killing and executing – and not in Palestine alone – five Americans, or Britons, or Frenchmen." At the same time Iran restored relations with Great Britain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Egipt, Jordan, and even Saudi Arabia, in spite of the fact that shortly before his death Imam Khomeini said Iran could at some time make peace with its archenemy, Iraq, but it would never make an agreement with Saudi Arabia. The Imam's dislike of the Saudis in the result of the death of hundreds Iranian pilgrims who died during clashes with Saudi security forces on their way to Mecca in 1987. Under Khomeini, Iran repeatedly called on Saudi Arabia to renounce its status of the custodian of shrines of Mecca and Medina. Now there are indications that Iran has dropped these claims for good.

Experts agree that Turkey remains Iran's only real rival in the region. However, despite NATO military bases deployed in Turkey and Turkey's secular way of life, Ankara and Teheran, continue to preserve good-neighbourly relations, due to the similarity of the two countries' interests. The shortest route connecting Iran with Europe runs through Turkey, which exports industrial goods to Iran in big quantities. The two countries' strategic interests meet in Kurdistan.

Iran's relations with the United States evoke special interest. The USA continues to be branded in mosques throughout Iran as Shaitan Bozorg, The Greater Satan. (The euphemism for the Soviet Union is Shaitan Kuchk, The Lesser Satan). The country has not dropped its extremist anti-Americanism which has been cultivated for many years. This was confirmed at the end of this May when several houndreds of students gathered outside the University of Teheran shouting "Students, arise! Death to the Americanized version of Islam!" Police had to be called for. During those tumultuous days Rafsanjani said in connection with a different episode: "We have key problems in the region which cannot be solved by taking to the streets." Relations with Washington are one such key problem. After all, the Greater Satan has defeated the Saddam regime which constituted a direct threat to Iran. Will the inertia of anti-Americanism prevail over the pragmatic approach of realistically-minded politicians? Chances are that pragmatism will finally prevail. Anyway, the president of Iran has already mentioned US-Iranian consultations mediated by Swiss representatives. It appears that the next stage will be restoration of Iranian-American relations, a measure that would enhance stability in the Persian Gulf.

Meanwhile, Iran is expanding trade ties with other Western countries – Germany, France, and Japan. The United States has lifted restrictions on imports of Iranian oil. For the first time after the 1979 revolution, the World Bank granted a loan of $250 million to Iran to help in the aftermath of the huge earthquake.

Now a few words about the Iranian economy.

I have selected the kiwi fruit as my personal indicator of a sound economy: if there is kiwi on sale all year round, this means that the economy is free and stable, and can afford the buying of exotic fruit for hard currency. As I toured Tehran's grocery shops early in the morning, I spotted cherries, melons, watermelons, and apricots. The only imported variety was bananas from Latin America. The country's economy is experiencing hard times.

The turbulent past decade has reshaped the Iranian economic structures. Large-scale nationalization of the immense property of the Shah and big financiers was carried out, and the so-called Islamic sector of the economy was created on its basis. In practice, the Islamic sector refers to special completely autonomous funds possessing enterprises and land and removed from the control of state ministries. Enterprises of the Islamic sector produce a wide range of goods from household things to state-of-the-art weapons, and all the pro-

fits go to the treasury of the Islamic clergy. In addition, the Islamic sector enjoys one more important privilege – it is allowed to speculate on the difference of exchange rates: It purchases goods abroad at the low exchange rate and sells them in the country at the domestic exchange rate which is 20 times as high. However, this way of making a profit has been meeting with difficulties lately.

What about interest rates on bank loans? Islam prohibits Muslims to profit by receiving interest on loans. However, this ban is usually remembered only when a religious organization asks for a loan.

This year the state allowed the activities of moneychangers. Diplaying thick wads of banknotes, moneychangers sit all along Teheran's Firdowsi street. The dollar is well respected here, but Soviet rubles can also be exchanged, though at an exchange rate 45 to 50 times lower than that of the US dollar. Actually, the local currency can already be considered convertible, although inflation keeps devaluating it.

One of the biggest problems is Iran's dependence on imports. Iran imports two thirds of all its food, while the lion's share of export revenues (90 to 98 percent, according to different estimates) is derived from the export of crude oil. Consequently, fluctuations in world oil prices cardinally affect Iran's economy.

Evidently, President Rafsanjani and his team have set themselves the task of transforming the centralized and heavily subsidized economy into a dynamic, decentralized free market economy. The task now is to form a balanced budget, to attract foreign and domestic capital to the industrial sectors of the national economy, and to provide for stable convertibility of the rial. This is a very bold programme, as there are many obstacles on the way to its implementation. For example, there remains a law prohibiting the use of foreign capital, which forces Iranian businessmen to seek and find alternative ways to do business. The government faces resistance from various groups: opponents representing religious forces which enjoy the majority in Parliament, state officials, and activists of the Islamic movement who sabotage the cabinet's course in order to preserve the closed and isolated character of the Iranian economy with its egalitarian tendencies. However, the government has already made some progress. Although the GNP still cannot reach the pre-revolutionary level, in 1989 it grew for the first time in four years by four percent and last year by an unprecedented 8 percent.

A few words about the Soviet Union's economic ties with our southern neighbour. These ties could be much more stronger and variegated, were not our position so catastrophic. In more favourable times, we could capitalize on Iran's ambitious programme of building heavy, mining and machine-building industries. The political atmosphere now is also favourable for us – the West is still in shock from the Rushie case.

At present the Soviet-Iranian trade turnover amounts to $800 million. We export to Iran petrochemicals, diesel fuel, various equipment; and receive in return Iranian gas, rare metals, detergents, garments, footwear, traditional Iranian pistachios, and... black caviar which we then successfully re-export. As a result, we have a $ 60 million debt. In short, everything depends on ourselves, and on how quickly we can sort things out in our own economy. The question is whether Iran will wait for us or whether it will choose other partners? However, this is already a question for us.

Vladimir Zhitomirsky,
our special correspondent
Photos by author
TEHERAN–MOSCOW

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Russians are coming!

A new international mafia born from the economic chaos of socialism

A Russian presence has always been noticeable in Poland. However, it has become increasingly spoken about only recently. It must be noted right away that the term "Russians" in this case applies to Soviets collectively and carries no ethnic connotations. In this case the word "Russians" is used in the same way as the words "Americans" or "French," irrespective of concrete nationalities. In this connection, let us remember that the Russians, waves of whom regularly sweep Poland, are first of all Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Byelorussians, and only then Russians proper.

This has already become a natural part of the Warsaw panorama: rows of cars with Soviet licence plates and the standard choice of vodka, caviar, meat grinders, fans, cameras, and alarm clocks displayed on the hood or on the patch of pavement below. The impression is that the Soviet Union is a miraculous cornucopia.

I would like to avoid any liberal interpretation of facts or personal appraisals. For this reason I will confine myself to exact quotations with the naming of sources.

"Disappearing as if into a black hole"

"Smugglers travel from Warsaw to Mexico via Moscow. Then they cross the border into the United States and travel as far as Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago. Once there, they contact the mafia doing business in stolen cars. As a result, a ship packed with 300 cars moors in Gdynia. It is by sheer chance that customs officials learn that all the cars are stolen" (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, No. 82/1991).

"Russian mafia groups have settled in Gdynia and Warsaw, transferring stolen cars to the Soviet Union... They travel to the East carrying Polish documents of purchase. They also have false technical certificates and licence plates. After they cross the Polish-Soviet border they disappear as if into a black hole – and there is no chance to trace the cars" (Ibid).

"Russians are selling Ladas in the West and transfer Audis, VW's, and Opels back to the East by resorting to the services of Polish gangs of car-thieves operating in Germany. The following episode attests to the organized character of this kind of crime. Before the very eyes of the police, motorists who convoyed a Ford Grenada in a Soviet-made Lada fixed Soviet licence plates and headed for the Soviet border checkpoint of Brest..

"Krzysztof Kozlowski, the Interior Minister in the Mazowiecki cabinet, believes that several Soviet Mafias are currently active in Poland" (*Wprost*, No. 20/1991).

The Interior Ministry of Poland believes that at least 40 000 to 50 000 cars stolen in the West are now in Poland and most cars will soon be smuggled to the East.

But even this is not the biggest racket.

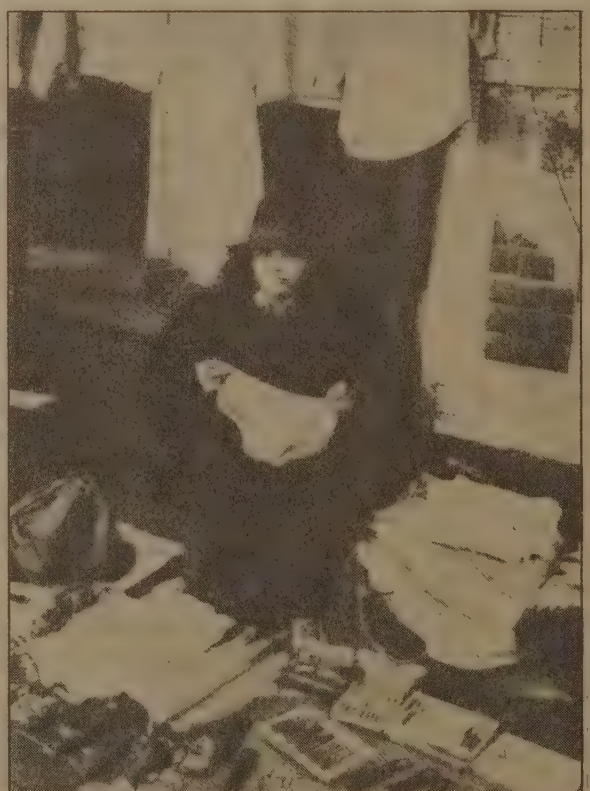
"For several years already Poland has served as the transit base for the Soviet mafia operating in Western Europe and the United States. In the middle of 1990 a Soviet-Polish gang was arrested in Brest while transporting 20 kilos of gold, jewels, and SUR 2 million in their cars. The suspicion was that this was only one of many such convoys...

"Western secret services believe that rough diamonds are transported through Poland after which they arrive at Vienna's Karntnerstrasse, the street of jewellers. As a result, the profits greatly exceed the initial investments" (*Wprost*, No. 20/1991).

Drugs, illegal arms trade, street or pick-up prostitution, gambling in the streets and in market places, the threat of a "fourth wave" of Soviet emigrants – all the filth that brings disgrace to Soviet people – is being vividly discussed by the Polish press today.

Facts are facts, but the press campaign has aroused different feelings in me. Wouldn't it be better to first count the proportion of criminals in the general number of migrants who are natural in the modern world? Is it permissible to regard all Soviets travelling abroad as potential black-marketeers and criminals? Wouldn't it be more correct to leave the criminals to the care of the police and to allow free people to exercise their natural rights freely, as becomes a modern civilized democracy?

It was with mixed feelings that I started approaching the source of **reliable** information. After many days of camping on the doorsteps of the Polish parliament, government, Interior Ministry, and Foreign Ministry, I finally approached the man who controls all information about foreigners coming to Poland for all possible reasons, including political emigration: Col. Zbigniew Skoczylas, the authorized officer of the Migration Minister.



A street vendor in Warsaw

Photo from the Spotkania magazine (Poland)

Who breaks the law after all?

"Look here," the colonel says, "four refugee camps near Warsaw are packed with Ethiopians,

Somalians, refugees from Ghana, Syria, and even Indonesia."

"What about Soviets?"

"Soviets are a different thing. The developments under way in the Soviet Union and the current situation with human rights does not allow us to consider Soviet citizens emigrants. For us they are only migrants.

"The percentage of curious tourists and people on a business trip is rapidly decreasing in the total number of Soviet travellers. Instead, more and more merchants come to Poland. This situation is very familiar to the Poles," the colonel noted. "Things are getting back to normal in Poland now thanks to the stabilization of the zloty and a generous domestic market, but five to six years ago a Pole would go to work abroad for a month, earning $300 to 500 (working twelve hours a day for measly pay), and would then bring the dollars home, exchange them at the exorbitant domestic exchange rate, and then be comfortably well off throughout the following year.

"The Soviet Union is following the same path," the colonel went on to say. Everyday up to 18,000 Soviets come to Poland. At least 60 percent of them come to sell things, to make some extra money, to work as private taxi drivers (Soviet taxi drivers have started to appear in Poland offering a ride for half the regular price). Most of these Soviets operate in Poland's eastern areas. Many head deeper into the country: via Belostok to Warsaw and the Baltic Sea coast, and via Peremysl to Krakow and Szlensk. Some even make it to the German border where they actively trade with Germans who come to Poland with exactly the same purpose: to sell things. The average profit a Soviet merchant makes amounts to one million zlotys, about $100. By selling the dollars in Moscow at the exchange rate of $1 to SUR 30, in a couple of days a merchant makes three thousand rubles which is eight or nine times the average monthly pay. The arithmetic of the business is really very simple.

The Polish police are reluctant to consider the moral angle of the trade. After all, selling and buying things is a voluntary transaction between the vendor and the buyer. The economic angle is of no greater interest to them either: "This is the result of the economic chaos in your country, and hopefully, it is a temporary problem." The Polish side is concerned most of all about the legal aspects. Quite naturally, street vendors do not pay taxes, do not receive official trading permits from the Polish authorities, or abide by any other rules. However, the colonel was convinced that the formation of a civilized business infrastructure within the coming two or three years will sweep street vendors from Polish cities.

The colonel did not seem especially concerned about Soviet citizens' coming to work in Poland. They work as taxi drivers, construction workers, farm hands or hired labourers. The longest term of work does not exceed three weeks, or perhaps a month. Soviets work twelve hours a day without any days off, earning minimal pay: PLZ 500,000 to 1,000,000 a month (US$50 to 100). However, they willingly find work in Poland due to the inconvertibility of the Soviet ruble and the exorbitant exchange rate of the dollar. "This is a legal rather,than economic problem for us," the colonel said. "Soviet citizens do not break any laws, the transgressors are their Polish employers who do not pay taxes or provide their employees with any social guarantees."

I drew the colonel's attention to the law on free travel currently adopted by the USSR Supreme Soviet. My interlocutor refused to regard the adoption of this law as any reason for panic: "OK, let's see. A foreign travel passport will cost 1,000 rubles, the fare for the trip to Poland, especially from more remote areas of the USSR, will cost approximately as much. The law will be enforced after a year and a half. By that time Poland will have had quotas of professions needed on the domestic job market. It is no secret that the job market in the West is very restricted. It will be restricted here, too."

It will be no easier to come to Poland as a tourist. After the abolition of mandatory invitations (which have also become a hot item on the black market) minimal hard-currency provision rates will be introduced. Such rates amounting to US$20 a day have already been set for Romanians wishing to come to Poland: have cash, will travel.

By the end of 1991 Polish law-makers will have completed the work on the package of laws regulating the foreigners' status in Poland, which will also concern Soviets. The Polish side hopes to negotiate similar documents concerning Poles in the USSR. "However, we are not ones to complain," Col. Skoczylas said. "Last year 6 million 200 thousand Poles visited the USSR as compared with 4 million 300 thousand Soviets who came to Poland."

Noticing my obvious disagreement and anticipating my objections that the situation may change radically in a year's time, the colonel reassured me: "When problems arise, one should look for solutions, not succumb to despair. In a year and a half's time our Eastern border will be **completely computerized.** This means that computers will remember everyone who has crossed the border in either direction. Those who violate the laws will not be admitted to Poland again. On the other hand, we are insisting that the Soviet side increase the number of border checkpoints. The Soviet-Polish border stretches for more than 1,000 kilometres after all! Lines of cars and busses snake for five, seven, sometimes even more kilometres on the Soviet side and people have to spend days in unhealthy conditions. We are prepared to open special checkpoints for tourists in order to separate the tourist traffic from the cargo traffic, and at the same time to facilitate the anti-smuggling effort. What about transit passengers? Must they also spend days in the common line? They also need separate routes.

"In general, the border can be an eldorado. Let's leave aside customs duties and other budget revenues. Let us consider the purely business angle. We have a lot of applications for purchase of land along the border to build parking lots, camp grounds, gas stations, supermarkets – everything that is needed for civilized commerce and communication. If we are able to implement these proposals quickly, there will be no need to travel deep into the country to buy things. There will be places to sell things and we will be able to put an end to tramping."

At the end of our conversation I asked the colonel's opinion about the Russian mafia so often mentioned in Poland. His answer was laconic: "We have been receiving some signals. Apparently, there is an internationally organized group which could be called a German-Soviet-Polish mafia."

In lieu of a sequel

"50 Mazda cars from a Japanese ship arrested by Soviet customs officials in Vladivostok have been smuggled into Poland, said representatives of the Polish Railway Customs Service.

"The cars were taken to Moscow by train where Polish merchants bought them en bloc. Then the cars were smuggled to Poland with no documents and have been registered there since March. The Japanese side presented a diplomatic note to the Soviet government protesting the disappearance of cars in Vladivostok" (*Gazeta Wyborcza,* May 21, 1991).

What will the mafia merchants do after the adoption of new customs rules and tariffs in the USSR? This may become a plot for another mafia thriller.

Rudolf Borecki,
our own correspondent
WARSAW

The World Paper

Middle East money

Saddam Hussein's military adventure has split the Arab world. Yemen, Jordan and the Palestinians who refused to condemn Iraq have found themselves in the least advantageous position. However, the victim of the aggression, Kuwait, is not in such a bad situation thanks to it visionary financial policies. The expansion of Kuwaiti capital continues all over the world, although Kuwait now shuns some of its former friends. Meanwhile, the occupied Arab Palestine which has lost the support of most of its Arab donors may be faced with the prospect of economic cooperation with Israel

Same camels, new products

Iraq's Saddam Hussein had told millions of impoverished Arabs that his occupation of Kuwait embodied the struggle for a new Arab economic order based on a just and more equitable distribution of wealth among the Arab people. But in political and economic terms, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait meant that, in effect, Hussein controlled more than two-thirds of the oil reserves in the Middle East.

The industrial West saw in Hussein's control of Kuwait a repetition of the bitter memories of Mussadeq's nationalization of Iranian oil in the 1950s, the Arab oil embargo during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the Islamic revolution in Iran and the rise of Khomeini in 1979 and the bloody Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s; all of which have threatened free access to oil from the deserts of the Middle East to the factories of the capitalist world.

The Gulf sheikdoms had clustered together into an exclusive richman's club, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), as far back as 1980, soon after the Iran-Iraq war broke out.

They were always wary of the territorial ambitions of their two large neighbours who engaged in a bloody war which lasted for eight long years.

From their legendary palaces, the Gulf emirs made occasional handouts to poor Arab countries, but rarely committed themselves to long-term aid projects. Gulf states hired millions of Palestinians, Jordanians, Egyptians, Yemenis and Sudanese, among others, to literally run their countries for them.

But their billions were invested outside the Arab world: in French gas station chains, British luxury hotels, Japanese real estate and US financial institutions.

Nonetheless, the GCC was unable to protect Kuwait from the invading Iraqis. The Gulf states had to turn to the US for help. By the time the Iraqis were driven out, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait had paid more than US$14 billion and are expected to pay another $21 billion to cover the cost of liberating Kuwait.

Jordan, Yemen and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) have now been taken off the GCC's aid list because of their political stands during the Gulf War. Their nationals, who brought in billions of dollars in expatriate money, were either expelled en masse, like the Yemenis from Saudi Arabia, or harassed into leaving.

The loss of expatriate money could mean catastrophe for Jordan and the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Jordan, which lost $4 billion in trade with Iraq and the Gulf states because of the conflict, as well as direct aid and expatriate remittances, was also punished by the US which cut its military and economic aid, estimated at $38 million annually. Yemen's US assistance was reduced to 10 percent of its pre-Gulf War figure.

On the other hand, Arab countries which contributed to the anti-Iraq alliance, mainly Egypt and Syria, are expecting substantial rewards from the Kuwaitis and other GCC countries. As a token of their appreciation, the GCC members met in Damascus in March with their Syrian and Egyptian allies to discuss the setting up of a new defence and economic order. A $15 billion development fund is to be established to assist Arab countries who supported Allied intervention in the Gulf.

Iraq's defeat also means that GCC countries can now ignore the July 1990 OPEC quota agreement which was engineered by Saddam Hussein himself one month before his occupation of Kuwait. Hussein had forced GCC members to stick to their production quotas in an attempt to raise the price of oil to a respectable $24 per barrel after it had dropped to as low as $10 per barrel.

The US will almost certainly get the lion's share in terms of contracts and trade agreements. In the 1980s, US exports to the GCC countries reached $80 billion in commodities and military equipment. Kuwait's reconstruction alone is estimated at $70 billion...

In addition to rebuilding both Kuwait and Iraq, US and European arms industries are eyeing anxious clients among the rich Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, which is eager to buy the latest high-tech weapons systems. During the Gulf crisis, the US proposed a $20 billion arms deal to Saudi Arabia, which was later halved. But other deals are expected to spring up as soon as talks about a regional security system for the Gulf intensifies.

US peace efforts in the Middle East to settle the Arab-Israeli dispute and the Palestinian question are a direct consequence of the Gulf War. Again Arab oil money is lubricating the US-engineered peace machine. The GCC countries are now more susceptible to the idea of peace with Israel. The Israelis, on the other hand, are looking at a gold mine in the form of vast Arab markets that could suddenly open up to Israeli-made goods and expertise...

In economic and political terms, the Middle East today is opening up to US dominance. On the surface there is promise of reconstruction, political stability and economic security. But deep inside this troubled region there are issues which still need to be addressed and will continue to haunt the victors of the Gulf War. Bridging the gap between poor and rich Arabs, normalizing relations between the Arabs and Israel and taming Muslim fundamentalists are issues which will not be solved with US military might and Arab oil money. The "pacification" of the Middle East may have started, but it is a long way from completion.

Osama El-Sherif

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Kuwait's secret weapon

The city of London is home to many famous financial institutions. In the shadow of Saint Paul's Cathedral sits one of the most powerful and, until recently, one of the most secretive. It is the Kuwait Investment Office, known throughout the world's money markets as the KIO.

More than any other Arab institution, the KIO is a striking symbol of overseas wealth. It controls around US$40 billion

of Kuwait's foreign holdings, which are estimated to be worth at least $100 billion. The KIO owns large chunks of companies in the UK, including a 9.8 percent stake in British Petroleum (BP), and has made similar investments elsewhere in Europe.

Kuwait has been investing its oil money abroad for nearly 40 years. The country has always shunned the idea of rapid consumer spending, preferring to set aside funds for the benefit of future generations and ensuring that this money is managed sensibly on a long-term basis.

In 1976, Kuwait set up its Reserve Fund for Future Generations, to which at least 10 percent of the country's oil revenue must, by law, be added each year. The Reserve Fund cannot be touched until that law is changed and, despite the havoc created by Iraq's invasion, this is unlikely to happen before the next millenium.

The KIO is the operational arm of the Kuwait Investment Authority, which in turn reports directly to the Kuwait Ministry of Finance. It started life in London more than 20 years ago, when the country's oil money began to flow in earnest. Most of the KIO's investments belong to the Reserve Fund...

The KIO's reputation in London and its operational experience there made it a rallying point for the Kuwaiti government-in-exile. It also helped the country's banks deal with problems created by the freeze and worked closely with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, the state oil company which has also had a London office since 1983...

Althgough firmly rooted in London, the KIO has recently been hunting for bargains in Spain. It is now the largest foreign investor in that country, with assets valued at between $37 billion and $8 billion.

The KIO was unusually aggressive in building its Spanish investments, refusing to bow to opposition from domestic groups and adopting hostile tactics. It was motivated by the need to diversify its holdings as far as possible and Spain, with its fast growing economy, was too good an opportunity to miss.

In October 1987, it snapped up almost 22 percent of the oil giant BP. The British government subsequently ordered Kuwait to reduce its stake to below 10 percent after an official UK report argued that the KIO was acting against British interests. The affair caused some friction between the two governments, but the Kuwaitis walked away with a profit of over $600 million.

The KIO is not the only guardian of Kuwait's international investments. The government itself owns a 14 percent stake in Daimler Benz, Germany's biggest industrial grouping which recently expanded its activities from motor manufacturing to aerospace.

The state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Corporation owns over 20 percent of another German industrial giant, the chemical concern Hoechst.

Like the KIO, Kuwait Petroleum had a presence in London which enabled it to deal with the crisis that broke on August 2, 1990. The company's operations were initially coordinated from London, since most of its directors escaped from Kuwait during or immediately after the Iraqi invasion.

Although future expansion plans will inevitably be hampered by the war damage at home, Kuwait Petroleum has already formed a joint venture with the state oil industry in Hungary to build and run gas stations.

And investment isn't confined to Europe. Last year Kuwait Petroleum started operations in Thailand, which it sees as a springboard to other Asian markets. It has several Q8 gas stations in the country and aims to add more at the rate of two a month.

Kuwait has also said that it intends to borrow hefty amounts of US dollars on the international markets to help pay for the damage. There will be no shortage of lenders, since the country's massive oil reserves make it highly bankable...

Nigel Adam
London,
Great Britain

For Israel, Palestinian prosperity key to stability

Make money, not war: this might be the best advice for both Israelis and Palestinians travelling on the road to peace. Any peace agreement will last only as long as the Palestinian economy prospers and socioeconomic development has had a chance to cement the fragile strands of political stability.

To summarize the nearly 25 years of Israeli rule in the territories, one might say that Israel wants the benefits of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, both as a source of cheap labour and a market, without the responsibility of developing the region's economic and industrial infrastructure. The Palestinians, on the other hand, want all the economic benefits that integration with the Israeli economy brings, but without Israel.

The problem facing the Palestinian economy is that it is currently just an extension of the Israeli economy, whether as a supplier of labour, a subcontractor or a filler of any other niche existing in the Israeli market.

How would an independent economy on the West Bank and Gaza Strip fare? The consumer market in the territories is only worth about US$1.5 billion, which is slightly less than 10 percent of the total Israeli market. Yet a basis for industry already exists. In Jenin, the northern part of the West Bank, an agricultural machinery plant sells to many area kibbutzim. In a factory in Ramallah, 300 women workers produce high-quality lingerie for sale in the United Kingdom. And in Gaza, one factory manufactures car radiators, batteries and exhaust systems.

Today, there are 1,400 Arab-owned businesses in the territories, almost a five-fold increase from the 300 existing in 1967. Of these, 400 could be classified in the industrial sector of the economy. Most are small workshops and factories located in the West Bank only 40 of which employ more than 50 people. In Gaza, where industry is still in its early stages, more than 90 percent of these small workshops employ fewer than seven persons. The total contribution of industry, large and small, is just 7 percent of the combined West Bank and Gaza GDP.

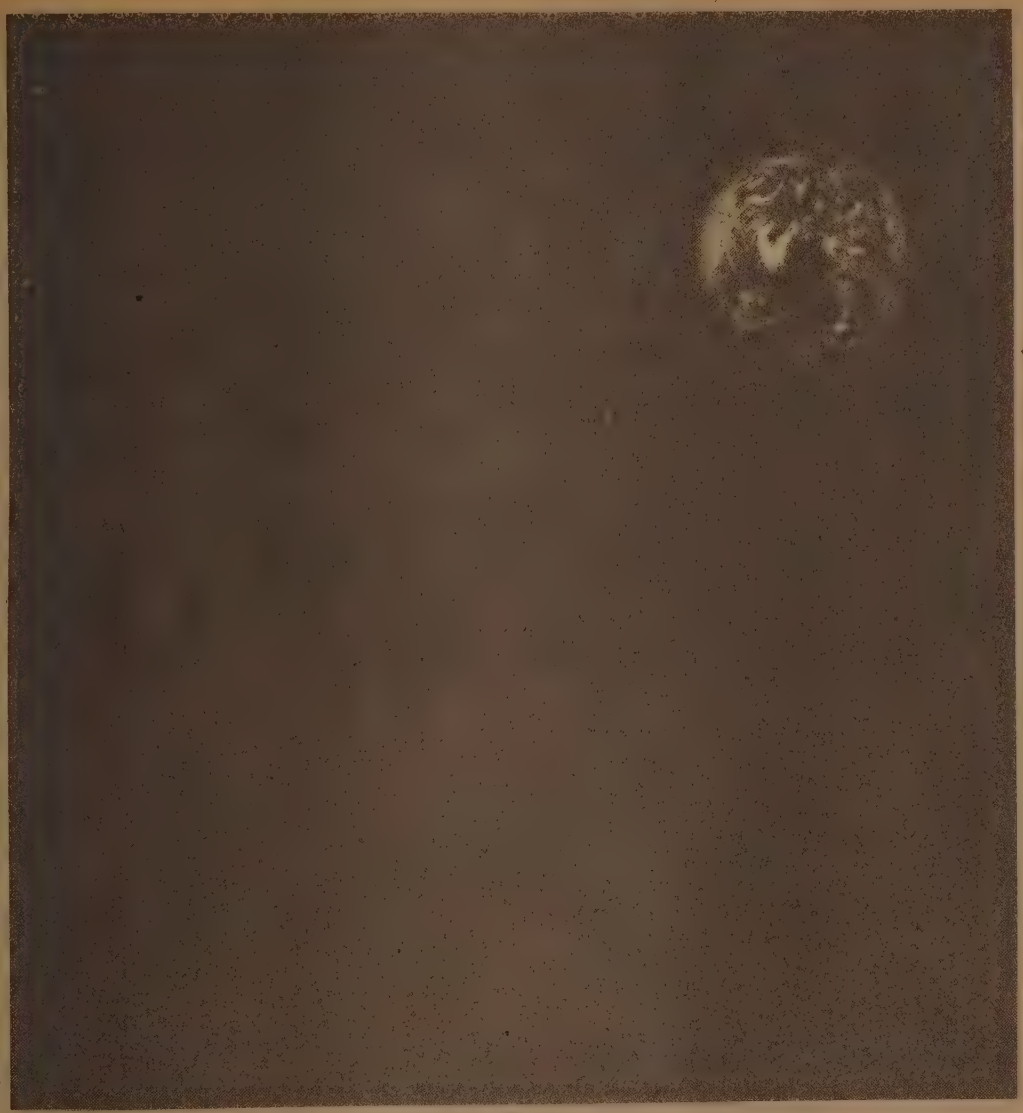
A major restrains in the Palestinian textile industry is a lack of international marketing and technological know-how. Almost every producer competes for the low end of the market, with most of the production being subcontracted by Israeli firms. There is also little growth potential in the Arab world due to stiff competition with countries like Egypt, where labour is cheaper than in the West Bank.

If the agriculture is to be profitable, the Palestinians must mirror Israel's strategy of getting high-value crops to market a month or even weeks before others do in order to command the market for even short periods. This plan would require a sophisticated marketing infrastructure and significant financial resources.

The quarry industry in the West Bank also has a great future. More than $70 million worth in asireh exports – a durable stone that doesn't absorb water – were registered in 1989. Some people are not as optimistic about low-tech, light industrial products (lamps, electronic capacitors) which will find fierce competition from other Arab countries.

Situated in the geographic centre of the Arab world, Palestinians might be significantly better off focusing on developing service industries; they possess a definite advantage due to a high level of education. Success in the service industry could yield a relatively high level of economic development.

For instance, using the educational advantage, the West Bank could easily become the publishing capital of the Arab world. With moderate capital investment, the Palestinians could sell their educational, medical, financial, insurance



When a Broad View Is Taken, the World's Food Problems Don't Seem So Big

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But this would also require a sizeable . . . investment. Economist George Abed, the executive director of the Geneva-based Palestine Welfare Association, estimates (calculated before the Gulf War) that for a Palestinian state to be viable, $25 billion would need to be pumped into the economy over a 10-year period. Of this amount, $15 billion must be spent on the overall physical and social infrastructure. To raise the industrial sector's share of GNP to the targeted 25 percent from the current 7 percent, $6 billion would be needed, as well as an additional $3 billion for agricultural developments.

Abed believes that $7 billion of the $25 billion total would come from the Gulf states, $6 billion from official bilateral assistance and $3 billion from international financial and development institutions. The $9 billion private sector bill would come via investment by Arab and international businessmen.

Stanley Maron of the kibbutz research centre Yad Tabenkin points out, however, that even if these billions could be raised, "throwing" these funds at the West Bank and Gaza would be like a rainstorm in the desert; the current economic infrastructure would not be able to absorb the flood of capital.

The "right of return" might be the greatest socioeconomic problem the new state would face. In addition to rehabilitating refugees in the West Bank and Gaza, if additional hundreds of thousands from Syria, Lebanon and Jordan returned, they would have to be fed and housed, and then find jobs. The rate of increase in the territories is already very high at about 3.5 percent a year. More than 15,000 new workers enter the labour force each year.

Separation of the Israeli and Palestinian economies would also cause hardships. Consider current statistics: more than 100,000 West Bankers and Gazans are employed in Israel, about 45 percent of the total work force in the territories; and work in Israel brings in 42 percent of the Palestinians' GNP, estimated to be around $2 billion.

The influx of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union has swamped Israel, with yet another source of cheap labour. The result could be that many Palestinians will lose their jobs to the newcomers, further compounding the Palestinians' current economic problems.

Even if the status quo continues, or if the emergence of an independent Palestinian state remains a long way off, Israel can do much to improve relations with residents of the territories by removing the heavy hand of government that blocks economic opportunity.

Although the *intifada* has made it almost impossible for Palestinians and Israelis to discuss economic options, one point is dear to all: the Palestinians' economic problems must be solved before, or at least alongside, their political problems.

Joel Bainerman
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Regional trade ties overcome political logjams

Only token intra-Arab trade now in the Middle East

Politics don't guarantee peace agreements, solid economic ties do.

Probably the only way to bring peace and stability to the Middle East and to get rid of current and future dictators is to enable capitalism to gain a foothold in the region. Once economic self-interest is firmly established, democratic systems of government will surely follow.

Currently, only 5 percent of all Arab trade is intra-Arab trade. The obvious reason is that Arab nations have not developed their industrial infrastructure. But even when certain products are available, importers choose a European or other supplier. Such is the case with West Bank Palestinian products. Neighbouring Arab traders often base decisions for purchasing Palestinian goods on politics; for example, whether there is a current dispute with the Palestine Liberation Organization or fear that West Bank products contain Israeli components.

Overall, however, it is the lack of close political ties between Middle Eastern countries.

Economic ties need to precede peace treaties. One way for this to happen is for the US to initiate an EEC-type organization linking Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, Turkey, Morocco and Cyprus. Once Israeli agrotechnology finds its way to Saudi Arabia, the Middle East will take on an entirely new political face.

The skewed distribution of wealth is one of the region's major economic problems. For instance, 2.1 million Kuwaitis share nearly US$30 billion, while Egypt's 55 million inhabitants split less than $35 billion.

How will the Syrians build a stable political environment if their economy doesn't prosper beyond the current $1.670 per capita GNP?

An even larger question mark hangs over Jordan whose economy is more than $8 billion in debt (more than 100 percent of GNP) and heavily reliant upon a mixture of foreign aid and remittances from workers in other countries. The Gulf War is estimated to have cost Jordan more than $500 million in revenues from its tourist industry and caused a steep decline in exports.

Thirteen years ago, Israel and Egypt signed the first Israeli-Arab peace treaty. In those early years many Israeli businessmen and industrialists visited Egypt and saw great potential in doing business there. The enthusiasm climaxed in 1981 when 60 Israeli firms participated in an international exhibition in Cairo, most of them in the agricultural field.

Yet a decade later, bilateral trade between the two countries has barely increased. In 1990, if Egyptian oil exports which amount to more than $150 million are excluded, total trade is a paltry $10 million as Egypt acquires only 0.05 percent of all Israeli exports. Thus the cold peace.

Without a greater understanding of how economic impasses and obstacles contribute to the Middle East conflict, the future is left to worn-out myths and neatly put propaganda.

J.B.

A closed book

Alexander Didusenko

The 46th session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in Budapest will, as likely as not, be the last one in the history of the economic organization set up by the "socialist community countries." It has died quietly following the death of the community itself. Long before the last session, the participating countries had reached the final agreement to close the Council. To quote the Hungarian paper *Nepszabadság*, "the CMEA headquarters in Moscow, always likened to an open book, is closing. The book is being slammed shut. The story is not to be continued."

Indeed, closed is the book from which the partners should have learned, over four-odd decades of the CMEA's existence, at least the essentials of economic cooperation, integration, and international division of labour – what the congresses of those countries' then ruling parties described as "combining the advantages of socialism with the achievements of scientific and technological revolution." They have failed to learn anything or to "combine." They have found themselves in the position of conceited passengers who believe only their own – hopelessly slow watches, and who thus have missed the train of world civilization and are now trying hard to catch up with it on their national hand-cars.

There is something symbolic about the fact that the CMEA and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, which have exerted specific political and economic influence over Europe and the rest of the world for decades, are receding into the historical past so quickly. What will the European and world political scene look like without them? Today, it is still difficult to answer this question. Nevertheless, I cannot agree with the statement that the story is not to be continued. The CMEA's record is far from irreproachable, of course. The primacy of ideology over economic interests, the dealing with economic problems by administrative methods, the attempts to squeeze life into the rigid patterns of official economic theories about "two worlds," "two markets," and the like have certainly done no small damage to all the former CMEA member states. No one intends, of course, to carry on the practice of linking our European neighbours to the USSR's raw material base at all costs (which, incidentally, has turned the USSR into a colony of sorts, a source of cheap raw materials for the satellite countries). On the other hand, the CMEA member states benefited from using the common transnational oil and gas pipelines and the integrated electric power supply system, as well as from participating in joint enterprises, laboratories, and research institutions. The intellectual capabilities arising from cooperation, even though not put to good use in the past, should hardly be dismissed either. Besides, even running after the train of civilization is, in a way, a desperate attempt to change the course of history, to make wishful thinking come true. This is obviously a hopeless attempt: why should a train stop and wait for the passengers who have missed it?

"Perhaps we must try and convince Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria today that this is not just a matter of their unpreparedness to enter the European Community where they would simply be swallowed up economically, but that this is also a matter of the EC itself being unprepared to accept them," the Paris paper *Le Monde* wrote in this connection. The former heads of state and government of industrialized countries – members of the international organization Inter-Action Council – did some arithmetic and drew the following conclusion: It will probably take more than a decade to transform one system, based chiefly on central planning and state property ownership, into another system based chiefly on market principles, private property ownership, and free enterprise stimulation.

The CMEA is dead. Does Eastern Europe need a new economic organization?

Such a long road is hard to traverse alone, and some may even find it beyond their powers. All the more so because the links established for decades cannot be severed overnight. Until recently, imports from the Soviet Union met three-quarters of the Eastern European countries' liquid fuel and gas requirements. Soviet deliveries of iron ore, cotton, paper, cellulose, and timber provided employment for hundreds of thousands of people. In turn, imports from Eastern Europe – forty billion rubles' worth (on the average) of machines, medicines, and consumer goods – filled the chronic gaps in the Soviet Union's market supply. Therefore, the clearer it became that the CMEA was on its way out, the more often voices were heard saying that the crisis in which the former CMEA member states found themselves should be resolved by joint efforts. The important thing is that while abolishing the CMEA, its former participants are contemplating the formation of a new international body – the International Economic Cooperation Organization (IECO).

"The CMEA is dead," we say today. Shall we say tomorrow: "Long live the IECO?" This depends on whether the negotiators succeed in overcoming the inertia of administrative economic thinking and are able to create an organization based on market principles which will take the interests of all its members into account and through a coordinated effort help each of them overcome the economic and technological barriers obstructing their ascent to the European standard.

ETHNIC PROBLEMS

Let them keep mountain peaks

Valery Tishkov
Director, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, USSR Academy of Sciences

Ethnic myths and realities

Scientists, writers, and politicians explain to their fellow citizens from the silver screen, who they are and to whom they ought to take the oath of group allegiance, who bears the blame for the mess we are now in, where "the enemies of the nation" are to be looked for, and what primordial territorial rights the given group has. True, they do not specify how far back these rights should go – to the early Paleolithic period or to the reign of Catherine II – to qualify the ethnic group in question for the "primordial" territory, the boundaries of which often do not coincide with "arbitrarily-drawn" official ones.

Against the background of sudden liberalization and deepening poverty, the popular masses, customarily obedient to their leaders and having little if any experience in democracy, are now coming to

Hostages of nationalism

be classified by their belonging to certain "nationalities and ethnic groups". Scientists and politicians have put a truly devilish question to the residents of Buryatia, for instance – namely, who are to be considered indigenes: the descendants of the Russian Old Believers who settled there 300 years ago, or the Buryats, the descendants of nomads who migrated to those parts in the beginning of 13th century?

Mutually exclusive ethnic loyalties (a straight Ukrainian or straight Russian, not like the writer Nikolai Gogol who called himself an Ukrainian and a Russian rolled in one) have been prompted by the off-repeated intriguing words, recorded in the Constitution, about the nations' right to self-determination. This right drew the greatest support from the budding legislators of the first Soviet parliament and from the local Party and bureaucratic elite, by filling a new ideological vacuum with ethnic nationalistic ideas. On the other hand, when previous brutalities were often of a selective nature with respect to different peoples, when there were no democratic institutions in the country, when suffocating centralization reigned supreme at the district, region, and city levels, when it as necessary to secure the authorization of the national authorities for the establishment of a business association, a bank, a film studio, a drama company, or a research institute, when "ethnic minority" status was looked down upon – then the nationalist movement, the rule of ethnos, became the most natural and the most readily accessible form of collective action.

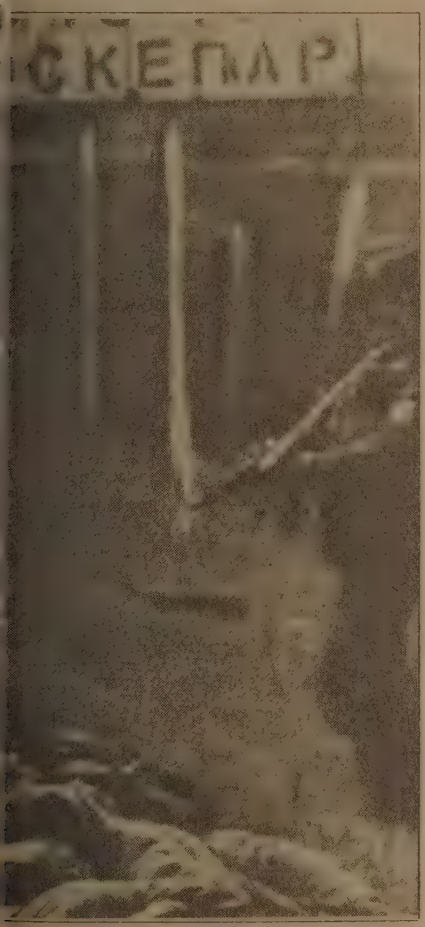

Photo from Paris Match (France)

They put down their newspapers and picked up their guns

Well, what about politicians and intellectuals? Before they had time to partake of genuine academic freedoms, to get rid of their claims to a "scientific leadership of society," to cure themselves of the vicious passion for social engineering and, most importantly, to purge from their minds the postulates of "the solely correct teaching" and to acquire the latest humanitarian knowledge, they willingly assumed the role of new spiritual leaders.

Having picked out from the Marxist-Leninist doctrine whatever it had to say for the dictatorship of the nationalist idea even implicitly they presented it as the means and the purpose of democratization to the masses who were raised in an atmosphere of class intolerance. Writers' incancations like "Nation is an intransient category" (B.Oleinik) and "I'd rather die than live to see the moment when my native tongue disappears" (V.Bykov), which sounded at public meetings and appeared in newspaper columns, have won popularity in our society. The People's Deputies of Georgia unanimously elected, by a show of hands in the good old Party meeting tradition, the philologist and historian Zviad Gamsakhurdia to be President of the Republic. Mr.Gamsakhurdia explained to the residents of Georgia, in his winsome manner, that what really matters was not the economy of the Black Sea coast or the prices in the national markets, but the "old Georgian inscription still to be seen on the bridge across the Besleti river near Sukhumi," "the Zepkhviskaosiani culture which linked Abkhazians and Georgians, and the ancient Georgian churches adorned with Georgian inscriptions, which are still to be seen in Abkhazia." However, he warned, there are "enemies," "agents," and "traitors of the nation" who seek to take everything away from Georgians – except, perhaps, Shota Rustaveli avenue in Tbilisi.

The leaders of Abkhazia, who have opted for the "protective" variety of ethnic nationalism, suggest that ethnic Abkhazians constitute 50 percent of the deputies of the Autonomous Republic's parliament. And this despite the fact that the Abkhazians account for 18 percent of the population. And there is, of course, the trivial matter of the article in the Constitution on citizens' equality irrespective of their nationality.

Nationalism, and those capable of loudly preaching it under certain social and historical conditions, is bewitching. Men other than the leaders and intellectuals tear themselves away from the TV screens or put down their newspapers and make for the abovementioned bridge near Sukhumi, with their guns at the ready.

Blessed are the believers

Nationalism and national identity emerged spontaneously at the turn of the 19th century and promptly became part of a broad spectrum of political and ideological realities, gaining extensive social ground. Created by European intellectuals, the idea of a nation became synonymous with co-citizenship within a common statehood. Interethnic relations have specific features of their own which distinguish them from international relations.

Having renounced the idea of building up a proletarian power, politicians and scientists somehow retain their faith in another chimera – the building up of ethnic states, on the assumption that ethnic nations alone lay the groundwork for the economic and social progress of society and give birth to statehood itself. As Nikolai Berdyaev aptly put it, a nation is as much of a myth as the proletariat is. However, many scientists still cannot get rid of Lenin's confusing discourses on the nationalities question put into terse definitions by Stalin.

Those who are trying to provide the grounds for, or have even started bringing together the "primordial" ethnic territories (Russian, Georgia, Moldavian, or others) under the motto of a "single and indivisible statehood" remain the slaves to nationalism. Among the captives to the nationalistic doctrine are those who crush imperial, totalitarian structures, hoisting their flags over the shabby village Soviets.

Generally speaking, nationalist policies are pursued not only by leaders in the republics, but by the Centre as well because all of them stick, to Stalin's definition of the nation. It is true that upon coming close to the realization of the self-determination idea, Baltic politicians came to see, earlier than others, the limitations and hopelessness of its nationalistic variety. It was not for nothing that after March 11, 1990, Landsbergis said that it was the **people** of

Lithuania, including all the citizens of the Republic, who had exercised their right to self-determination (not the Lithuanian nation!) And recently be formulated his own notion of a nation not as an obligatory ethnically homogeneous community but as co-citizenship. It was not for nothing that Latvia stopped the practice of indicating its citizens' nationality in their passports. The third session of the Estonian National Front discussed the need for revising the law on the official language, which had been adopted in too much of a hurry, and considered the possibility of Estonian-Russian bilingualism. The response was not long in coming: the idea of independence was accepted, according to the latest opinion polls, by most of the Baltic republics' residents irrespective of nationality.

These trivial ideas were prompted by foreign consultants. But why hadn't the matter been given a thorough consideration before? There had never been the case of millions of people learning to read and speak in their neighbours' language in a matter of 3, 5 or even ten years.

The language aggression unleashed by intellectuals put in a still more difficult position millions of our country's citizens belonging to nationalities which began speaking Russian long ago. Now whole ethnic groups ashamedly find themselves, over a territory stretching from Chukotka to Karelia, belonging to a thought-up "Russian-speaking population" category. These are numerous and worthy ethnic communities with their distinctive cultures, including Buryats, Maris, Mordva, Komi, even Tatars, Bashkirs and Byelorussians, who use Russian, as their native tongue, at home and at work.

As they comment on the current developments in Eastern Europe, some experts express the opinion that the processes under way there and in the USSR are natural ones: "Every nation should go through a period of self-awareness and self-assertion before it approaches the period of self-realization"; "the less developed countries of Eastern Europe cannot avoid the historical stage of disunity on their way to reunification under new conditions."

Whence such anti-historicism? Didn't numerous national states emerge by the year 1918, after the collapse of three large empires, in place of two of them, Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman? Those self-determining nations got a chance to form their independent states on the basis of ethnic principles. That wasn't an easy matter. Those states turned out to have ethnic minorities of their own. With the attainment of national independence, East European nationalists did not become more tolerant towards ethnic minorities than their former imperial oppressors had been...

The tragic 1930s–1940s seem to have discredited nationalism, especially its extreme forms like Nazism. Established in Western Europe and North America were civil principles of societal organization with elements of conciliatory democracy which protects the rights and interests of the ethnic communities and meets the citizens' specific requirements.

Nevertheless, ethnic nationalism is not gone from the social stage, particularly in such widely spread forms as "nation building" and the formation of "nation states." The idea of a nation will probably long remain a powerful mobilizing force for polyethnic communities until the standard of material well-being is high enough for the national wealth to be shared with the "aliens" without tears. In such a democracy, groups and individuals will be able to uphold their status and interests even if their rulers are not necessarily of the same nationality as they are, and each citizen will have a chance to create and possess values which will mean more to him than group loyalty with its ready sacrificiality and minimum personal responsibility.

Will they resign themselves in Vorkuta?

In the USSR, ethnic movements have played a positive role over the past few years, but the trouble is that nationalism, using deep ethnic feelings and attachments, and covering itself up by the attractive slogan of every nation's right to self-determination, is often antagonistic to this ethnicity and presently betrays democracy itself. A common language and a common culture facilitate the activity of social institutions. However, the popular belief (often encouraged by politicians and intellectuals) that the territory and statehood can belong to ethnos, and that its representatives are entitled to a special status and to special rights in civil communities, is a tragic delusion. Even if in the process of disintegration of the Soviet empire one of the "master nations" succeeds in "cleaning" its republic as part of the "Georgia for the Georgians" campaign, for instance, it will doom itself – and its coming generations – to an eternal hostile encirclement and moral torment. The ethnic minorities of such "national states" as a rule do not give up the fight for their own self-determination.

Do the separatist leaders have the moral right to claim UN seats for their republics while practicing ethnic nationalism at home, i.e. dividing their citizens into indigenes and "aliens" who often amount to a half or even to a majority of the population of those "national states"?

The political and cultural elite of autonomous formations proclaiming their territories "national" is even more ridiculous. The Bashkirians, for instance, have done themselves a bad turn by declaring their republic a "national state" and granting the right to buy land to the indigenes of Bashkiria only, not to Tatars who make up a majority of the Republic's population... How can the sovereignty of Tataria be referred to as the exercise of the Tatar nation's right to self-determination if four-fifths of the Tatars neither live, nor intend to live in that part of the country? What were the authors of the declaration of the Komi Autonomous Republic's sovereignty thinking when they stipulated that only a person of Komi nationality could be the president of the republic. Will Vorkuta coalminers humbly resign themselves to the prospect of their children's choice of professions being restricted to coalmining? And finally, the politicians' discourses about the self-determination of the Russian nation and the creation of the Russian republic is a no less alarming form of nationalism.

In every region, territory, and republic of Russia there live citizens who have an ethnic cultures of their own, and who are interested in preserving and reproducing it. These self-governed "principalities," rather than the "national state" enclaves – autonomies admidst depersonalized territories and regions – will keep huge Russia together. And then its neighbours will probably recover from a bout of nationalism, realize to their horror how easy it is to turn words, ideas, quotations from ancient chronicles and archaeological inscriptions into blood. Upon realizing this, they may wish to enter into allied relations with Russia.

Now if the territorial-national idea is a matter of such deep concern for the present political leaders and statesmen – ranging from Communists to nationalists – let them give this territory, including arable lands and forests, to the people free and forever, and keep only the mountain peaks (as is the case in Norway), dividing them between the Centre and the republics at will. As a result of such self-determination, man will get what it takes to become a citizen.

Today, rioting mobs emerge from communal flats and slums. But if they have sheep of their own grazing on their own pastures, and if they have their private orchards on their private land plots, they will think twice before they set other people's homes on fire, before they smash bridges and roads. ■

Sympathy for reforms in the Soviet Union

Foreign Secretary **Douglas HURD** is considered to be one of the harshest critics of the Soviet Union's policy. **Yuri Sigov,** a journalist, met with Mr Hurd in London and asked him to answer a number of questions concerning the present situation in the Soviet Union

You have visited the Soviet Union on more than one occasion. Has any material change taken place in the USSR over the last two to three years?

We are fascinated by what is going on in the Soviet Union. It is so unfamiliar as far as your country is concerned. We are all struck by the great flood of ideas, arguments, and conflicting comments now coming out of the Soviet Union. The British government and people have sympathy for the reform you are trying to carry through.

What does the political leadership of Britain think about the confrontation between republics and the central government?

In general, we in the West and in Great Britain are not interested in the break-up of the Soviet Union. This could lead to a situation which once existed in the Balkans. We would like to see most of the present republics remaining in the Soviet Union. In any case, you should solve this problem yourselves. We support the idea of building the Soviet Union on a new basis. This must be achieved by agreement between your republics. However, it is easier to say that from London than to tackle all these problems in Moscow.

What is the attitude of the British leadership to the proclamation of independence by some of the Soviet Union's constituent republics?

Britain makes a special case of the Baltic and other republics. It has never recognized the annexation of the Baltic republics in 1940. We must respect their political and historical background, and we think that their present aspirations are legitimate. However, all political changes should be effected by peaceful means, by negotiation.

As regards other republics now proclaiming their independence, it is their internal affair. They could decide this matter by negotiation with the central government.

Who of the Soviet political leaders is today most popular in Britain?

Unfortunately, your political leaders, especially young ones, are not very well known in the West. If you take a man in a London street he knows something about Gorbachev, he may have heard something about Yeltsin, and recently he heard something about Sobchak during his visit to Britain.

I think that the shootings in Vilnius and also in Riga did have a powerful impact here. However, people continue to regard Mr Gorbachev as a resourceful and experienced politician who has to fight his way through difficulties. There is still a feeling that President Gorbachev is associated with reforms. We can speak about support and sympathy for reforms and, to a lesser degree, for the personality.

Is Britain going to give financial or technical assistance to the USSR in the near future or will it wait until the situation in our country becomes stable more or less?

Britain is not interested in granting large credits to the Soviet Union as long as the present system remains. The USSR can now be compared with a man who is in need but has a hole in his pocket. Unless the pocket is mended the money will disappear. I think that at the given stage Britain could provide technology and experts and help in food distribution, for example. We already help you in this matter and want to intensify cooperation of this kind.

We do not refuse to help the USSR. However, British assistance will depend first of all on the economic and political situation taking shape in the Soviet Union. As for political stability in the USSR we cannot wait when it is achieved. After the Lithuanian events the West had serious doubts about the further course of reforms in your country. Most Western countries are today prepared to continue to cooperate with the Soviet Union, but refrain from giving large credits to it.

What confidence does the Soviet Union enjoy on the part of the West, and Britain in particular?

Judging by the opinion of ordinary people in Britain, they continue to have confidence in the Soviet Union. As regards trust on the political level, we have a good understanding on crucial international problems. We do not approve and support all the actions of the Soviet leadership, but we do not see reasons for an open confrontation.

Your main problem now is to create a market economy. It is difficult because you do not have a traditional basis which existed, for instance, in China and enabled it to solve many problems within a few years. I quite understand the people who are nostalgic for the command economy in view of the inefficiency of the new democratic system in the USSR today. The transition to a new system cannot be effected within one day.

Therefore you have to go forward. The USSR is not just tanks and missiles. It has immense natural wealth and intellectual and psychological resources, and precisely this can ensure the prosperity of the Soviet Union in the future. ■

Harsh reality after fanfare

The international human rights organization is to open its bureau in Moscow

New Times is proud to be the first in the Soviet Union to have appraised Amnesty International at its true worth. There was a time when books exposing "ties between Amnesty International and secret services" appeared continually, while KGB men warned Soviet people against dangerous contacts with guests from London, where the organization has its head-quarters.

On the day I drove around Moscow with Amnesty International Secretary-General Ian Martin to take him to the addresses which were of interest to his human rights organization, an anonymous officer of the Traffic Police Department (GAI) called my parents, even though I had given a different phone number during registration. Citing the colour and license plate number of my car, he asked where it was at the moment, and when I'd be home, because I had exceeded the speed limit and had run a red light. My wife, worried by the call, apologized on my behalf saying that I accompanied a guest from Britain and that we were in a hurry. On hearing her excuses, the GAI employee promised to make another call and send a penalty writ. But he did not make another call nor did he send a writ. I was politely told in the GAI central office that such methods are alien to the GAI.

Some time later an Amnesty International book on capital punishment came out in Moscow, and we began to publish information about Soviet prisoners of conscience taken from domestic sources. The walls which prevented Amnesty International from opening its office in the Soviet Union, as it had in 60 other countries, seemed to have collapsed. However, in June the *New Times* office was visited by **Marjorie Farquharson,** an Amnesty International representative in Moscow (she had paid a visit to our office in April 1989 along with Amensty International Secretary-General Ian Martin), and it turned out that things were not as simple as they seemed. The initial flourish of fanfare in honour of Amnesty International was followed by more sombre notes.

New Times. The leaders of Amnesty International paid their first visit to Moscow more than two years ago, but the organization has not yet opened its section. Why?

Marjorie Farquharson. I came to Moscow last January with the sole purpose of establishing our section here. It seemed to me that for some time I was in a deadlock. Luckily, changes have taken place recently. Last April the Foreign Ministry granted me the status of an Amnesty International representative in the USSR. It is a somewhat strange decision because the organization is not accredited in Moscow and has no formal status. It seems I shall be given some document which I hope will help me to receive a visa.

Photo by V. Panov

N.T. What kind of visa are you talking about? I remember telegrams sent by Ian Martin from London. He asked for help for Amnesty International employees who were not allowed to come to the USSR. But you are here, in Moscow.

M.F. Yes, but I was issued a visa for three months only. After the visa expired I had to return to London and go through the necessary formalities again.

N.T. Why did you not prolong your visa here, in Moscow?

M.F. It was made clear to me that this was impossible. I do not want to return to London for a visa. The present visa expires in September, when an international conference on human rights will be held in Moscow.

But, on the whole, many people help me here, and the Foreign Ministry helps too. The Krasnopresnensky district Soviet offered premises for our information bureau. It is an old-fashioned flat in a beautiful place, on Hertzen Street, with the Moscow Conservatoire across the street.

N.T. Some people allege that, faced with the problem of legal registration in the USSR, Amnesty International resumed its criticism of Moscow. Before that it turned a blind eye to many events, including the tragedy in Vilnius.

M.F. Amnesty International does not allow such compromises in principle. This question was widely discussed after Sergei Kovalev's article in your magazine. He wrote that at the Geneva session of the Human Rights Commission our organization did not raise the question of the Lithuanian events. Kovalev linked this stand with Amnesty International's plans to open its bureau in Moscow. On the whole, we did not keep silent about the shooting of peaceful civilians by the army in Lithuania. Vytautas Landsbergis even sent a letter of thanks for our campaign after the events of January 13. I think that Sergei Kovalev and I simply did not understand each other.

N.T. Why are you going to set up an information bureau in Moscow? It seems that at first you intended to open a section, as you did in other countries.

M.F. We open sections in the countries where contacts have been established, there is freedom of information, the public know about our organization and, at last, there are conditions for our work. An information bureau will have to provide these conditions within a shorter time. It will explain our concept to people so that they will express the desire to take part in the work of the section. We are now opening an information bureau in Hong Kong. So the USSR is not the only experiment of this kind.

N.T. When will the bureau be set up?

M.F. I am afraid it will happen only by the end of my stay here, that is, by the beginning of next year. True, I wish it could be done earlier, by the autumn conference in Moscow.

N.T. On the last day of the conference in commemoration of Sakharov an Amnesty International representative announced the beginning of a new world campaign for the release of political prisoners, as Sakharov urged. Soviet names were mentioned, too. This probably surprised those who think there are no longer political prisoners in the USSR.

M.F. I can name several typical cases: Torez Kulumbegov, chairman of the South Ossetian parliament, arrested by Georgian authorities; several conscientious objectors – Alexander Kopitsyn (see *New Times*, No.19), Sergei Osnach, Mikhail Khodos, and Nikolai Shust; Vladimir Kaptel and Sergei Vorotnikov, who attemted to cross the border (the latter is kept in a psychiatric clinic); Alexander Goldovich (see *New Times*, this issue p.48) and other inmates of the last Soviet political prison Perm-35.

N.T. How many Soviet citizens have become members of Amnesty International?

M.F. New members are drawn in by my colleague who regularly comes from London. There are about 300 members in the Soviet Union now: relatively large groups in Moscow, in the Ukraine, and individual members in cities from Leningrad to Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

Before arrival in the USSR Marjorie Farquharson worked for several years for the research department of Amnesty International. On the Foreign Ministry's advice she rents a room in Moscow, though she fears that it is not quite legal. Marjorie officially exchanges British traveller's cheques for rubles and buys food in Moscow shops. True, sometimes the Amnesty International representative makes a compromise – friends bring her cheese from London.

Lev Yelin

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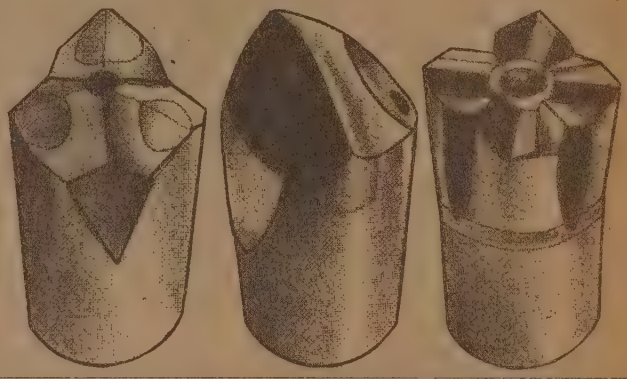

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"They have been checking us for another year"

Sometimes the means for attaining the goal were terrible, but one cannot win the war without intelligence. The former staffer of the Red Army Intelligence Directorate, retired Major General **Vitaly NIKOLSKY,** remembers

Of course, nowadays no one admits to his own blindness. Yet, could you tell us what you felt on the eve of June 22, 1941? Did you expect the impending war, or did you believe the official propaganda and your superiors?

I remember those months very well. We realized that the war was in the offing, but our reports were ignored. And the atmosphere was such that we were even afraid to talk to each other about it. You should bear in mind that by 1940 not a single old staffer was left in the intelligence service headquarters. All of them had been destroyed. Instead of top-notch professionals, we had for our chiefs hastily mobilized people who had been promoted to administrative posts and were changing in their turn like the pieces in a kaleidoscope.

Why did such a fate overtake the military intelligence service? The army did not have its own Yezhov or its own Beria.

After the fabricated "Tukhachevsky case" the repressions had dealt the army a blow from which it could not recover by 1941.

What did you know on the eve of June 22, 1941?

The year before the war I was working in the border area intelligence department, and I had access to all the information coming from the intelligence departments of the three Western military districts that at the time were known as special military districts. They all gathered intelligence with the help of agents. The agents, mostly local residents, were taken on a plausible pretext by our officers to the other side of the border. They followed the itinerary that had been worked out by the intelligence department, keeping a watchful eye on what was going on around them. Having collected the information, they would come back and make a report.

That does not sound like the fastest way to convey information that loses its actuality with each passing hour.

Unfortunately, we began the war with very poor technical equipment for our intelligence service. We had heavy stationary radio stations which could be used only by the agents who permanently worked in a given area, and "itinerary men" did not have an efficient radio communication, which, for that matter, saved them from being captured. After the war broke out, we demanded from our permanent agents such a large amount of information that they had to work on the key for hours on end. They were located with the help of direction-finders, and fell prey to the counter-intelligence.

Who did receive the information collected by "itinerary men"?

When an "itinerary man" returned, he was met by an intelligence officer who wrote down what the agent could tell him, collected whatever documents and photographs the agent had been lucky enough to obtain, and reported back to the chief of the intelligence station. Each military district had a couple of such stations near the border for meeting "itinerary men" and sending them back to enemy territory. The chief of the intelligence station conveyed the information to the military district over telephone, radio, or in person.

Who did receive the intelligence information?

It was received by the command of the district and the Red Army Intelligence Directorate.

As the information was transmitted along this chain, it inevitably underwent certain treatment and interpretation. Wasn't it ever distorted? The officers who were in charge of processing the information knew what Moscow expected from them and could not ignore the mood of their superiors.

No, the chiefs of the military districts' intelligence departments were experienced and honest officers. They conveyed to the leadership all disturbing information with commentaries that left no doubt that the war was in the cards. In February 1941, an important meeting was held in the Intelligence Directorate in Moscow, at which officers from military districts stated with all frankness that the country was on the brink of war and the intellingence service was not ready for it. There were no radio stations, no parachutes, and not even any automatic weapons suitable for ranger and reconnaissance groups. In the first months of the war, I had to send behind enemy lines groups armed only with pistols, as there were no submachine guns. It was suggested at the meeting that we set up reserve bases with stocks of food, weapons and ammunition that could be used in case a retreat became necessary. But that suggestion was not accepted, and our officers were called defeatists.

How did you get involved in the intelligence service?

I was about to graduate from the Academy of Chemical Defence when after the protracted clearance process, I, along with a few other students, was offered a job in the Intelligence Directorate. Then they acted as if they had forgotten all about it. I was assigned to the troops and served as assistant chief of chemical defence in an infantry division. And then suddenly I was summoned to Moscow. It turned out that the assignment to the intelligence service was postponed for a whole year due to problems with security clearance. Because we had been recruited by people who worked under Berzin, who himself had been dismissed as the chief of the Intelligence Directorate and executed, another year was required to conduct our security check.

What was the Intelligence Directorate like at that time?

It was a relatively small organization housed in a small mansion on Znamenskaya Street; it did not yet have a ramified organizational pattern nor any significant infrastructure. I studied for a few months in the central school for the training of commanding staff officers – the intelligence service's educational institution. For one year, I served in the department of military technical intelligence, and in 1940 was transferred to the border area intelligence department.

Who served with you?

I was 26 at that time, and I thought that my chiefs were very impressive men; they were middle-aged men with good experience. Soon all of them were removed. The chief of the political department, Ivan Ilyichev, played the role of the evil genius of the military intelligence. In 1945, already at the rank of general, he became the high commissioner of occupied Austria. Ilyichev, who did not know or understand the intelligence business, suspected each professional of being the enemy of the people and regarded each secret service man as a potential double agent and traitor. Our other chiefs were not much better. In September 1939 our military attaché in Poland, General Rybalko, returned to the Intelli-

gence Directorate and strongly recommended that we step up the work against the German army. In response, the then chief of the Intelligence Directorate, General Panfilov, rudely told him that "there was no place for fools in the intelligence service" and posted Rybalko to the field troops. They say that in 1943 Panfilov received an assignment as commander of the brigade in the corps commanded by Rybalko. Not without sarcasm the latter told his former chief that, evidently, it would not be easy for him to serve together with the fool. However, Rybalko left Panfilov in his corps. Before the war the chiefs of the military intelligence were not so magnanimous.

Did the foreign network also suffer?

Yes, it suffered greatly. When an officer from the central apparatus was arrested in Moscow, secret service men who "were locked" on him – both those who worked openly and under cover – automatically found themselves under suspicion. First their information was mistrusted. Then they were recalled to Moscow and executed. Members of the military intelligence worked abroad under the cover of military attaché offices and consulates. The political intelligence – the NKVD – had its own posts in the embassies. Sometimes our secret service men were recalled so suddenly that they did not have time to turn over their agents to their replacements.

So, the main damage to the military intelligence was caused not by the enemy counter-intelligence, but by its own chiefs?

We were better informed about the plans of the leaders of European states than about the intentions of Moscow. The signing of the pact with Germany and the advancement of Soviet troops into Polish territory was a surprise for the military intelligence. We did not even have time to move all our agents further west from the eastern regions of Poland, and as a result of the swift advancement of the Red Army to the Bug River, all our valuable informers found themselves in the Soviet rear. The same thing happened a year later, when the three Baltic republics were attached at once to the Soviet Union. It was a tremendous loss for the secret service intelligence on the eve of a terrible war.

Where were you on June 22, 1941?

In the early hours of June 22, a staff exercise was conducted in an atmosphere of the greatest secrecy in the Intelligence Directorate: the organization of intelligence designed to deal with a German attack. At dawn all participants in the game who had not gone home were told that German troops had invaded our territory.

Did you continue to work in the Intelligence Directorate after the outbreak of the war?

Yes, I continued to work there until November 1941, when I was assigned to the Intelligence Department of the 10th Army.

What were your responsibilities?

The summer retreat of the first year of the war was disastrous for the intelligence service, too. We lost all intelligence posts, cadres of secret service men and radio operators. In a word, we had to start over from square one: we had to find people and train radio operators. At first we did not even know where to find people in that rare profession – before the war such people were not registered. It took four months to train a radio operator, but we had to send groups to the German rear every day. People who knew German were not registered either. We searched all over the country for amateur radio operators and graduates of philological and pedagogical institutes who had studied German. The intelligence service also lacked its own aviation for dropping reconnaissance and ranger groups behind enemy lines. The 105th Air Squadron was formed only in 1943. Before that we dropped groups from whatever planes we could get. There were a lot of failures and tragedies. Sometimes the groups were annihilated right in the air.

How do you appraise the activity of the military intelligence during the first months of the war?

We coped with our task in the first months of the war because we were able to take advantage of the confusion and bustle, among the Germans as well. The occupation command needed time to register the population and create a local police. And we were acting on our native land. In nine cases out of ten, our agent in the occupied territory could count on the help of any local resident. And they always gave agents food, that is, if they had any. The main support of the intelligence was the partisan movement. It became more difficult to work when the German field gendarmery and the Gestapo began to function in the occupied territory and when Germans created a police force and began persecuting people who helped the partisans.

"We dropped intelligence groups from whatever planes we could get. Sometimes such groups were annihilated right in the air..."

The losses of the reconnaissance groups were so great that one cannot help but ask: have those losses been justified? Was the information gathered by the army intelligence so valuable that it justified sending people to their sure deaths?

Yes, it was. Otherwise we would not have been able to fight. Sometimes the means of attaining the goal were terrible, but one cannot win the battle without intelligence.

This is the opinion of an interested person. And did the army commanders share this view?

At the end of 1942, Stalin issued the order to disband the operational secret service intelligence in the link "army-front" because it had been penetrated by double agents and provocateurs and was being run by incompetent commanders. All secret service men were to be turned over to NKVD bodies. Junior officers were to be sent to the troops as reinforcements. The order came out when I was in Stalingrad, where the new front had been created, and we had put a lot of effort into setting up an intelligence apparatus there. And then it turned out that all our work had been in vain. They sent me back to Moscow, and for a few months I again worked in the Intelligence Directorate, where I saw how army and front comanders sent Stalin petitions, asking him to restore the intelligence service. Finally, an order appeared about the restoration of the intelligence service in the troops and the creation of the General Staff's Intelligence Directorate. But the consequences of the blow that was dealt the intelligence service at the end of 1942 were felt for a long time. The professionals who had been sent to join the troops had already been killed in battles. While the new officers were gaining experience, agents were losing their lives and the army was not receiving vital information. This is how things are in the intelligence service: if a secret service man makes a mistake, it costs him his life. If his chiefs make a mistake, perish the armies.

Interviewers **Leonid Mlechin and Tatiana Chernova**

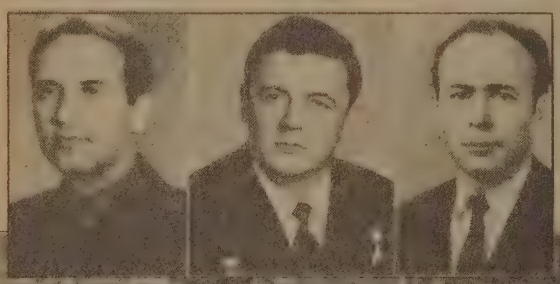
Space dramas

Some of them were never reported, others never happened

Leonard Nikishin

There are three versions of the history of Soviet cosmonautics. The official one is given in newspapers, magazines, books, and films. It includes reports by the Soviet news agency TASS, articles, running commentaries, reviews and interviews, reminiscences, and diaries. The second version is for "official use," so to speak. It includes documents of varying degrees of secrecy: protocols, acts, and resolutions. The third version is unofficial – stories handed down from one man to another, rumours and accounts often adding new details to or disproving the official information. There are stories about cosmonauts who made space flights before Gagarin and died in space accidents. There is a "real story" about the last days of the first cosmonaut "who recently died in a mental home but not in an air crash 25 years ago." One story, attributed to the Bulgarian seer Vanga, claims that Gagarin was kidnapped by extraterrestrials. Americans expressed doubts about cosmonaut Leonov's extravehicular operations in outer space, and an inspection was even carried out.

A new wave of space sensations of the "third type" appeared on the eve of the 30th anniversary of Gagarin's flight. One of the main sensations is the old story about the unknown victims of space flights. The newspaper *Sovershenno sekretno* (Top Secret) revealed the names of a dozen of such victims. A book about "the space victims of the Soviets" was put out in an East European country.



The funeral of cosmonauts Dobrovolsky, Volkov and Patsayev in Moscow in 1971. The details of their death have never been revealed

Equated with combat machines

Speaking on television, Boris Chertok, former deputy of the late Sergei Korolyov, the chief Soviet rocket designer, hit out at the authors of these inventions. But whom will the public believe after decades of official lying and hushing up space accidents?

Soviet cosmonautics has loyally served politics and, hence, only great accomplishments could be reported. Total secrecy has prevailed. The design characteristics of spacecraft and space stations were kept secret. As a matter of fact, they were equated with combat machines. The names of their designers and would-be cosmonauts were made known only to those "who had the right to know." The plans and programmes of launching were kept top secret. Most secret, however, was the information about failures, accidents, and crashes.

Of course public curiosity was not satisfied with glowing reports by the Soviet news agency TASS or resounding but empty commentaries dispatched by the

"chosen" special correspondents. Graphic details grew into stories and were passed on by word of mouth.

However, stories were also made up on an official level. Here is an example. It is known that Gagarin's spaceship was launched from Baikonur. This is true. However, it was not true when the launching was reported for the first time, because Baikonur lies hundreds of kilometres away from the Syr-Darya river and the town of Tyuratam near which the cosmodrome is situated. It was a clumsy masking for unknown reasons. Of course, it does not matter today, because we have become accustomed to the name. Incidentally, for 30 years now the cosmodrome has been known to the West under the name Tyuratam. The people concerned should have apologized for giving the wrong place of the blast-off in an official document and also for the report that Gagarin landed in his spaceship. He is known to have bailed out before his spaceship landed. This was a regular procedure for all spaceships of the Vostok type.

The dramatic episodes of the first space flights surpass any fiction. However, the officials concerned did not have the courage to tell the truth, the whole truth. Let us take, for instance, the last hours of the flight of the Voskhod-2 craft in 1965: the failure of the automatic attitude control system, the postponement of the re-entry, one more curcuit, manual attitude control with an error of ten degrees (the cause for the malfunction is not clear until now), the touchdown 1,500 km away from the calculated landing area, in the dense forests of the Perm Region. The cosmonauts, whose flight was watched by the world, spent several days in the depths of the forests listening to the howling of wolves. Did we hear anything about this?

Komarov's flight on board the Soyuz-1 acquired a dramatic character from the very outset when one of the solar cells panels failed to open. The launching of a second craft with three cosmonauts who had to dock with Soyuz-1 was cancelled. The ground control centre of the Soyuz-1 decided to discontinue the mission. However, the automatic ion attitude control system failed and the craft remained in orbit. With manual attitude control operated before descent, the cosmonaut had to find the course while over the dark side of the Earth in order to land home, so to speak. Fortunately, there was a full moon and Komarov was able to find his bearings by faint moonlight. The spacecraft was to land at the target touch down point. However, a disaster occurred in the course of landing. It was announced that the parachute shroud lines became entangled, though the craft's two parachute systems had actually failed. It is possible that the flight directors were not at first able to assess the situation properly. But who did not allow them later to give a correct explanation of what had happened?

The Soviet press devoted only a few lines to the space mission of cosmonauts Lazarev and Makarov. An emergency situation arose when the third stage of the booster failed, the craft landed in a mountainous area on a very steep slope and the cosmonauts experienced 18 g-load. I do not mention here abortive dockings. There were many of them, and nearly all of them were hushed up. It was shamelessly pointed out in reports by the Soviet news agency TASS that the programme did not even provide for docking.

Major failures were hushed up completely. Of course, the authorities concerned had to report the death of cosmonauts, but if there was any possibility to conceal something they did so. I can mention here the crash of a giant launch vehicle N-1, the failure of a Cosmos station soon after it was put in orbit, the explosion of a space booster during its take-off in 1983, when the cosmonauts could be rescued. The international public knew about this accident, but the authorities concerned did not consider it necessary to inform the Soviet people about it.

Without Ustinov's permission

Among the space achievements we were proud of in the 1960s was the soft landing of the Luna-9 craft on the Moon. The vehicle transmitted pictures of the other world back to the Earth. It was a sensation. The Americans were able to do that only three months later.

However, the joy of the scientists and engineers involved in this project was marred. The transmission of panoramic pictures of the Moon ended late at night. If it has happened in the United States, I can imagine how fast cars would have raced through the dark streets of New York or Washington to deliver pictures for the morning issues of newspapers. There is no such practice in the Soviet Union. Nothing could be done without the permission of Ustinov, then secretary of the party's central committee in charge of space exploration. Even the newspaper *Pravda* was not an exception. Nobody dared to call the "supreme commander" and the matter was postponed until the next morning. However, a scandal broke out in the morning.

Besides Soviet scientists, the information transmitted by Luna-9 was received by British radio astronomer Bernard Lovell. He deciphered the information and also obtained a panoramic picture of the Moon (with minor distortions). Since Lovell did not need Ustinov's approval he sold the picture to newspapers. The photo received by Soviet scientists and allowed for publication in the morning was published only in Soviet newspapers.

The newspaper *Pravda* then carried an article entitled "A Shameless Action." However, a year later Soviet scientists asked Lovell to pick up information from the Venera-4 craft.

Gagarin was indeed the first spaceman. True, his flight was attended with difficulties. The orbit in which his spaceship moved proved higher than expected, the instrument and descent modules which separated before re-entry remained connected by cables and "entered" the atmosphere together, the instrument module separated completely only after the cables had burned. It was a short and dramatic episode involving people who were watched by the world and who knew they had no right to make a mistake. Incidentally, no one remembered them in the general rejoicing over the completion of the flight.

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● *The All-Union Association Kinotsentr (USSR) has published a book about the famous Italian actor and pop singer Celentano, written by Y. Viktorova.*

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Agrarian and food crisis in our country started much earlier than seventy-odd years ago. It was an important topic of conversation even at the time when Russia ranked with the world's major food exporters. There were quite a few reasons for the crisis. One was the slowing down of the development of productive forces in the agrarian and other sectors by serfdom and by communal land tenure. The reforms carried out by Alexander II in 1861 got things moving, but the reformers' inconsistence and the period of stagnation which followed only aggravated the crisis. The resumption of the reforms by Pyotr Stolypin all but created favourable conditions for a breakthrough in the agrarian and industrial spheres. But there is a price to pay for everything, reforms included. This price increases if the reforms are late in coming, and if the resistance to them is too great. Superimposed on economic crisis, World War I blew the country up...

Within five years of the 1917 tragedy, Boris Davydovich Brutskus, a prominent Russian economist, did an enormous job of reviewing Russia's economic development and summed up the results of the Bolsheviks' economic experiments. He published his conclusions in the *Ekonomist* journal in Petrograd in 1922. The journal was not among the authorities' good books, although its editors and the economists who regularly contributed to it approved on the whole of Lenin's new economic policy. But while the authorities regarded the new economic policy – which was announced to be "here to stay" – as a means of consolidating their domination, the *Ekonomist* scientists saw it merely as the first step in "getting the economy back to normal." However, the logic of normal economic development upset all the calculations of those who had seized power.

In the end the journal was closed down, and most of its contributors were banished from the country.

Boris (Ber) Brutskus did not escape this lot either. The powers-that-were disliked not only the scientist's economic ideas, but his political views as well: he had openly put the blame for the famine of 1921 on the Bolsheviks, although with the reservation that the policy which led to the famine had gone further back.

The article which follows (in fragments) is also devoted to agrarian problems. Ending on a note rather optimistic for its time, the article was first published in a book of articles brought out in Prague in 1925 on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of Pyotr Struve's scientific career. Banished to Germany, where he lived in the twenties, Brutskus spent a while in Prague, giving lectures in the Russian Diaspora societies and in Czech schools. In the thirties, he moved to Palestine. One of the leading experts in agrarian economics, a scientist of world renown, a former member of Pyotr Stolypin's "brain trust," Brutskus taught at Jerusalem University for a spell. His lectures drew students from many countries. He spent the rest of his life in Palestine.

We hope that the article below will prove as interesting and instructive to you as it has been to us. ■

Concerning the land reform

Boris Brutskus (1878–1938)

Those wishing to ascertain the causes of the Russian agrarian crisis should examine the circumstances which slowed down the rate of Russia's economic progress in general and the development of its agriculture in particular, so much so that it came to lag behind the rate of the country's population growth. While Russia's enormous natural wealth (its vast expanses of outlying arable lands, its boundless northern woods, its fish and mineral resources) lay untapped, huge masses of redundant population built up in the countryside, which could not offer them gainful employment...

The agrarian crisis, which to peasants is elementary land shortage and can be resolved by enlarging the land plots in private use and which found its reflection in the intelligentsia's land shortage theory, is actually a product of interaction between numerous and complex factors. It testifies to the inadequacy of the country's entire economic, as well as agrarian, organization. As it is organized now the national economy does not have room for the entire population. This manifests itself in "agrarian overpopulation" which is very much in evidence in the more backward parts of the country. The agrarian overpopulation crisis can be coped with only by an all-round deepening of the national economy.

In his early but famous *Critical Remarks on the Economic Development of Russia,* P.B. Struve shrewdly defined the essence of the Russian agrarian crisis. "Overpopulation of the countryside," he wrote, "which is a legacy of the natural economy and of the technical irrationality of peasant work with its resultant inefficiency – such are the main causes of the peasants' impoverishment." Struve's assessments of the populist projects for the solution of the agrarian problem are also quite correct and logical. "There is no doubt," he maintains, "that at present the hand-over of private (squire-owned. – **Ed.**) estates to peasants will not solve the problem of overpopulation in a sizeable part of Russia – i.e., the problem of excessive work force and in places of too many mouths to feed relative to the amount of food produced in the given area. Even if it had been possible to solve the overpopulation problem through the above-mentioned hand-over, and the latter had been feasible, this would have put us several decades back, because ours remains a natural economy..."

Unfortunately, these remarkable words by Struve have been forgotten by all. As it intensified, the fierce struggle against autocracy made it fatally impossible for Russian society to approach the agrarian problem objectively. This struggle compelled the advanced circles of Russian society to put forward agrarian programmes which were dangerous from an economic viewpoint. The peasants were under the illusion that a simple redivision of land would bring them prosperity. Russian society was prepared to spend all of their poor country's cultural and material forces on this unproductive reform. The redivision of the communal land – a key cause of agrarian overpopulation – was encouraged in every way as part of the agrarian reform. Although the deepening of the national economy was the cru-

cial task of the time, top priority was given to food farming which was an obstacle to the progress of the national economy. The most dangerous thing about those projects was, however, the encroachment upon the private property principle, upon which any developed market economy is necessarily based.

The programmes put forward by different parties varied, of course. The programme of the socialist revolutionaries was especially dangerous to the national economy. Its purpose was to reduce all the land owning relations to a fluid state which ruled out any rational land farming, and it showed little, if any, concern for the principle of private property ownership. The implementation of that programme would spell an end to our national economy... All the left-wing parties claimed they knew how to solve the agrarian problem, that the solution lay in enlarging the peasants' arable land area; and all of them gave priority to food farming over any market relations. Besides that, even the most moderate programme presupposed the expropriation of big land property, which could be accomplished only through a revolution and the resultant take-over by extremists.

Woe be to the country which has not inculcated in the public the sense of legality and ownership

The political aspect of the question aside, we must admit that in the famous dispute between the left-wing parties and Stolypin over the agrarian issue the latter was correct from the economic viewpoint in saying that the agrarian problem could not be solved using the method suggested by the Left, that the answer lay only in a series of partial intercoordinated measures. He was doubly correct in opposing any encroachments on the principle of private property ownership. Stolypin succeeded in outlining the correct ways of resolving the agrarian crisis. Carried away by political struggle, however, Russian society failed to do justice to his policy, which it regarded merely as an effort to safeguard the class interests of the nobility. The Russian intelligentsia failed to realize that class interests, even those of the aristocracy, may not only contradict but also be in accordance with those of the national economy. After a long period of reaction, Stolypin succeeded in protecting the interests of the nobility as part of an effort towards economic progress. The measures he proposed were undoubtedly conducive to overcoming the agrarian crisis.

Stolypin's agrarian policy was not without its faults, which stemmed from the overall political situation he conducted it in. Without encroaching upon the private property ownership principle, the land rented by peasants could be allotted to them in a more or less final form so as to satisfy their fundamental need. The government was wrong in intensifying rather than easing the friction inevitably caused by breaking up communal land into private holdings. However, these faults do not detract from the value of Stolypin's agrarian policy. "We have staked not on the beggarly and the drunk, but on the competent and the strong," which was right – otherwise it is impossible to build up the national economy. If agriculture – the nation's vital economic nerve – is to be managed by peasants, the latter should be "accountable" to the national economy. Stolypin's agrarian policy was correct both in its particulars and in general. And the most remarkable thing is that despite its author's aristocratic tendencies, it was very useful to most peasants and yielded good social results...

Last but not least, the spiritual upsurge caused by the revolution of 1905-06 played a role. It shook the age-old routine to its very foundations, woke up the popular masses for the first time and stimulated their energy. And the government's agrarian policy gave that energy a certain vent for creative activity. On the eve of the war the live elements of the peasantry were drawn into it. Some settled on the land plots purchased from the Peasant Bank, others struck out on their own as farmers, still others migrated to the new lands in Asian Russia. The more civilized elements of the peasantry joined the cooperative movement. Progressive trends in the Russian peasant economy manifested themselves on the eve of the war more vividly than ever before. The commune was clearly disintegrating, and along with it the populist movement at its extreme. Nothing foreshadowed the storm.

If it came at all, it was called for by a purely external cause. The Russian revolution in general, and the Russian agrarian revolution in particular, are the results of a bloody war beyond the powers of an enfeebled country, a war which coincided with the fatal disintegration of its historic power. A rapid collapse of historic power brought forth all the destructive forces. The spirit of the commune and of populist extremism has revived.

"Woe be to the country," said Count S.Witte, Russia's most prominent statesman, in 1905, "which has not inculcated in the public the sense of legality and ownership, but, on the contrary, cultivated all sorts of collective ownership which, besides, found no definite expression in law, but is regulated now by an unknown custom, merely by the rule of thumb. In such a country there may arise events, the likes of which have never been anywhere." Those were prophetic – even sinister – words. The commune was dynamite under the foundation of the Russian national economy. The mutiny of the soldiers and sailors lit the fuse, and the dynamite went off. The Russian national economy lay in ruins and the land, the whole of the land without the national economy, was left without any value attached to it. The capacity of the territory shrank, the demographic problem was aggravated, and it came to be solved through bloodshed, famine and epidemics.

The anguish over the ruined great cultural values should not overshadow what is going on in Russia. The shoots of new life are seen in the chaos of destruction. The revival of the Russian national economy, of Russian agriculture has already started, and one can already see the foundations which are going to underlie them. The agrarian revolution has ended in great disappointment for the peasants. It has failed to produce the much-coveted scope for land farming. And wherever this scope did appear in the outskirts, it proved insufficient for economic prosperity.

The supreme triumph of the commune amounted to the act of its final demise. The peasants outlived its extremism to the end. Individualistic trends, which kept a low profile during the revolution, have come back to the forefront so emphatically, that even the communist authorities have to reckon with them. The revival of the Russian peasant economy is clearly progressing along the lines of the strengthening of private land ownership. This found its expression even in the legislation adopted by the communist authorities, and will take its final form after their departure from the scene. ■

Prof. **William Rosenberg** of Michigan University, author of five books on the history of the USSR, has been frequently called a "bourgeois falsifier of history" in this country. He was barred from Soviet archives which he, being an historian, wanted to study. Unlike many Western historians, however, Rosenberg never harbored any ill will towards his critics. As for the label "bourgeois falsifier," it definitely charmed him. This reaction was due in part to the fanciful wording of the phrase. The professor also regarded the label as evidence of indirect recognition of his scholarly merits in this country.

It was when he first read about himself as "bourgeois falsifier," that he realized he had become a real scholar, Rosenberg says, explaining his attitude towards his Soviet critics.

Times have changed and now one of America's leading Sovietologists is welcome in Moscow. He even enjoys as much access to the Soviet archives as his Soviet colleagues. However, a fresh salvo of criticism may be forthcoming. Professor Rosenberg investigates the genesis of the anti-market attitudes and advocates people's right to profiteering, which is essentially the foundation of a market system. Soviet historians who earn much less than taxi-drivers, doormen, shop assistants and waiters, will hardly agree with the professor's views.

* * *

Ruth Heidrich, 56, of the USA, has been champion twice and won second place four times at the annual Ironman triathlon contests in Hawaii. In the Ironman contests athletes are given thirteen hours to swim four kilometres, to bike 180 kilometres and then to run a marathon.

Ruth decided to expose herself to this hyperstrain after she was diagnosed as having cancer. Nine years ago the cancer diagnosis was a death sentence for the charming and beautiful woman loved by her husband and children. However, Ruth refused to surrender.

Her plan was to build up her body's immune resources by exposing it to excessive physical strain. Thus Ruth hoped to make her body more resistant to cancer. The doctors were very skeptical about the plan, but Ruth started training. Every week she runs 80 to 100 kilometres, swims 8 kilometres and bikes for 6 hours. Besides, she put herself on a strict diet which she has been following for seven years: rice, oat flakes, vegetables, fruit and water.

This way of life has made her a champion and allowed her to save a surprising amount of money. Every month Ruth spends as little as $60 on herself – her entire wardrobe consists of sporting T-shirts and track suits. It has also helped her overcome her illness. "I feel that my body is athletic and muscular. The skin is generously supplied with blood... Besides, training makes me sexy," she says.

* * *

Boris Notkin, one of the hosts of the popular TV show *Good Evening, Moscow!* admits that it was by chance that he became a TV star.

Boris Notkin graduated from the Interpreters' Department at the Moscow Foreign Languages Institute and worked for the Department of History of the Moscow State University for quite some time. At the age of thirty Boris Notkin defended his thesis

The rabbi who translates the Talmud

Rabbi **Adin Steinsalz,** 54, has devoted a quarter of a century to his life's main endeavour – the translation of the Babylon Talmud (Judaism's second most important book) from Aramaic into modern Hebrew.

Adin Steinsalz was born in Israel to a family of East European immigrants. His father advocated socialist views and it was at an early age that Adin familiarized himself with the works of Marx and Lenin. At school he excelled in mathematics and showed promise as a future physicist. But at the age of 14 Adin suddenly became interested in religion and decided to become a rabbi. At 15 he left home and entered a religious college of orthodox Judaism. At 23 he became the principal of a religious school and at 27 he decided to create a new edition of the Talmud.

The Talmud is the cornerstone of Judaism and the Jewish culture, featuring a unique style and dialectics of thought. However, the Talmud's "dance of thoughts" is practically incomprehensible to the majority of Jews today.

Along with translation, Steinsalz supplies commentaries of the previous interpreters of the Talmud, offers different variants of the original text, provides biographical notes and interpretations of Greek, Roman, Persian, and Aramaic words, and even gives some botanical information. In his garden the rabbi grows plants mentioned in the Talmud, watches them, and records his observations. By using a computer and with the help of 16 students, the rabbi hopes he will complete the translation in ten to fifteen years. He has also started translating the Jerusalem (Palestinian) Talmud and signed a contract with a US publishing house for the translation of the Talmud into English. According to preliminary calculations, the appearance of an English-language version of the Talmud will make the sacred book of Judaism accessible to about 8 million Jews who do not speak or read modern Hebrew. The rabbi believes this will help change the idea that Judaism is only a minor Western religion.

This titanic endeavour does not prevent Steinsalz from being active socially. Together with Academician Velikhov (USSR) the rabbi is one of the founders of the Academy of World Civilizations. Two years ago he initiated the opening of a Centre for Judaic Studies in Moscow.

E. Loyevsky

as Candidate of History specializing in the Soviet Union's Social structure as reflected in Anglo-American historiography. While working on his thesis he studied the works of many people who used to be called "anti-Soviets" here and who are now our principal advisors: Robert Conquest, Isaak Deutscher, Joseph Berliner...

Boris Notkin published an article in the writers' weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in which he proved that from the psychological point of view many Soviet campaigns, including the notorious campaign to irradicate alcoholism, were counterproductive. The article was noticed and its author was invited to Moscow Television, first as a guest and later as a night show host.

Notkin came to Moscow Television at the time when the profession of a TV host was still being formed. He capitalized on his extensive experience in journalism – he has travelled almost all over the world and given lectures in the United States. He stands out for his performance: he can be friendly without being unceremonious and dignified without being patronizing. Notkin always invites outstanding people to his night show: politician Alexander Yakovlev, film director Karen Shakhnazarov, etc. Notkin's almost permanent partner in the show is Moscow Mayor Popov who addressed Muscovites on current topics every Tuesday. The daily *Pravda* once ironically called Notkin "Popov's pocket press aide." Actually, though, Notkin can be tough on his interlocutors, because, he believes, a journalist must serve society, not the authorities.

"It has become very difficult to work now. It used to be clear before who the good guys were and who the bad guys were. Good guys were democrats and their followers. Bad guys were those who opposed them. Today it is becoming obvious that not all people who call themselves democrats are really democrats. The difficult task is to unmask such people without doing harm to the pro-democracy movement. Another task is to cheer people up without resorting to lies."

The *Good Evening, Moscow!* host rarely watched TV before and does not watch it very often now, either. He says TV makes him physically and morally fatigued. This may be Notkin's secret for preserving his originality.

* * *

Vasil Bilak's book *Reminiscences* has hit the Czechoslovak best-seller list and its popularity now is almost as high as that of Marquis de Sade's books. *Reminiscences* is one of the versions of the book *The Peak of My Life*

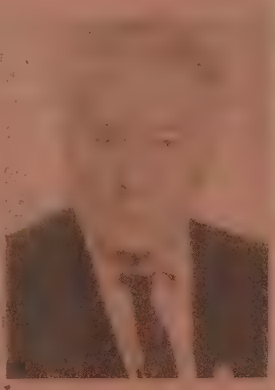
written between 1985–1987 – Bilak refuses to name the exact date. Vasil Bilak was the chief ideologue of the "normalization" policy in Czechoslovakia after the Prague spring, and until very recently he was the country's second-in-command after Gustav Husak. He admits that initially he made ten copies of his memoirs and submitted them to members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. His readers agreed that it was too dangerous to publish Bilak's book because it could undermine the prestige of the party and the policies the party was pursuing. However, the author never got three copies back. One copy was allegedly seen in the possession of Josef Mihl, former Central Committee first secretary's press aide who now runs the private publishing house that has published *Reminiscences*.

In spite of the fact that the book is achieving unprecented popularity in the country and that about a fourth of a million copies have already been sold, Bilak does not seem very enthusiastic about the sudden publicity and fame. He continues to live at his villa which is recognized as the most beautiful one in Slovakia and has sued the publishing house for theft of property. According to Mihl, the court rejected Bilak's claim, but demanded that the publisher supply explanations. Mihl admitted that *Reminiscences* may differ from the original book by Bilak because so many people have amended and corrected it.

Despite the scandal with the publication and the author's irritation, many people believe Bilak wrote the book in order to whitewash his reputation. In this case it becomes clear why Bilak insists that it was he who brought to power his friend Alexander Dubcek, who dreamed about "socialism with a human face" and denies any involvement in writing the letter to Brezhnev asking him to crack down on counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia. While some people think that *Reminiscences* contains nothing but syrup, others believe that after the publication, Bilak appeared a very clever man.

The rebellious environmentalist

Alexei Terentyev, 65, is waging a valiant struggle for the preservation of the unique environment in his native Republic of Komi, northern USSR. Progressing in his career from an ecology inspector to the head of the Ukhta Territorial Water Inspection, Terentyev has made quite a lot of enemies in the republic's industrial circles.



When an authorized state commission came down to preside over the commissioning of the Sosnogorsk central heating-and-power plant, Terentyev stressed his "special opinion." He was immediately called for a tongue-lashing session at the city Party committee, but five hours of hard pressing did not help alter Terentyev's stance. Terentyev firmly refused to put his signature under the commissioning act.

"In fact, such conflicts never ended," says Terentyev, now the Chairman of the public initiative Save the River Pechora and an associate editor of the republican newspaper *Ekologicheskiy Vestnik*. "The practice was to commission new plants, factories, etc. without purification facilities, so as to report to the authorities earlier. They used to say that the most important thing was the state plan, while the rest did not really matter much."

The authorities' contempt for Terentyev's advice often resulted in ecological plights. Terentyev meticulously reported each such case to higher authorities up to the ministerial level. In 1989 Terentyev addressed the Defence Minister, Dmitry Yazov. After the investigation that followed Terentyev's address, a military garrison stationed near the village of Berezovka was fined 30,000 rubles for violation of the environmental protection laws.

Dmitry Alexeyev
KOMI REPUBLIC

Concerning East-West cultural exchange

Why doesn't the dialogue between the "Russian idea" and the West work?

Alexander Mulyarchik,
D. Sc. (Philology)

If we liken the content of the "third basket" of the now legendary Helsinki Final Act of 1975 to a heap of Easter eggs which are appealing to the eye (but only to the eye!) one of the most fancifully decorated of them would be the one bearing the magnetic words: "Cooperation and exchanges in the field of culture."

"Cultural exchanges," carefully measured out in small doses, were encouraged in this country even during the worst of the authoritarian times. Stalin had set only the most reliable and predictable men to the intellectual get-togethers in post-war Paris, Prague, and at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. As a result there appeared, for instance, books like *Through the Eyes of My Generation* by Konstantin Simonov which served an obvious purpose.

Under Khrushchev, our orchestras, singers and dancers globetrotted almost unhindered, demonstrating their natural endowments (Russia has always been rich in talent), earning prestige for their country and a little hard currency for themselves.

Visiting with the Yellow Devil

Such show-off performances, which fall into the "entertainment" rather than "art" category, was accompanied, until quite recently, by a deliberate restriction of higher-level cultural contacts.

Intellectuals – writers and scientists, above all – were not allowed to stay abroad for too long and, therefore, had no chance to observe local mores, social or intellectual movements, and no opportunity to ponder the fate of modern civilization. Ardent patriots like Hertzen, Tyutchev, Turgenev, and Dostoyevsky were well informed about Western public opinion, and much of what they wrote helped establish firm links between the Russian Empire and the outside world. Even if that applied only to the upper classes, even if the logic of political and diplomatic interaction went by its own sometimes irrational laws, Russian students, writers, artists, and the Russian intelligentsia at large, did not feel isolated. Spiritually, Heidelberg and Lausanne were within Petersburg's easy reach, and express trains delivered fresh violets from Nice to Petersburg every morning.

In the twentieth century, the understanding between the two parts of Europe came to an end. The Soviet reader knew about the life in France between the two world wars from stilted novels by Ilya Ehrenburg, and about Weimar Germany from as ideologized but still weaker novels by Konstantin Fedin. The United States was even less fortunate in this respect. Both Gorky in his *The City of the Yellow Devil* and Yesenin in his *An Iron Mirgorod* took a very subjective view of America – and, besides, one can hardly expect much from those notes written just in passing. As distinct from his colleagues, a more sensitive Mayakovsky confessed, upon crossing the Mexican-American border: "You can bend over backwards to try and understand that country, but you never will." But almost in the same breath he said, with his characteristic inconsistency, something entirely different: "We Soviets have our pride, we look down on the bourgeois!"

Strangely, the army of emigrants who settled in European capitals failed to promote – with just a few exceptions – the dialogue between the "Russian idea" and the West. Young Russian residents of Paris went in for Marcel Proust, Andre Gide, Jules Romains, but the influence of those and other authors then in vogue is evident only in the works of second-rate prose writers like Yu.Felzen and V.Yanovsky. It so happened that there was no reverse process of assimilating things Russian, as distinct from formal Soviet. Even cosmopolitan France knew and valued three or four older-generation Russian writers and thinkers at the most, and showed neither interest nor curiousity in the rest. "France did not reject them; neither did it remember them: its hospitality was restricted to formal administrative courtesy," wrote Georgy Adamovich, a leading émigré literary critic who lived in Paris between the two world wars. "As a matter of fact it cared little for a small group of young and middle-aged people who wrote something in their unintelligible language and who dissolved, little by little, into homeless international boheme..."

Ilya Ilf and Yevgeny Petrov succeeded in grasping and conveying without distortions in their *One-Storey America* the atmosphere of the life in a strange country. In the post-war period, no one followed suit. With extremely rare exceptions, Soviet "travelogues" were marked either by ideological schematism, or by naive dilettantism which came from insufficient knowledge of the given nation's language and culture.

The "third wave" of emigration, which fell on the 1970s–1980s, did not help establish close spiritual bonds between our country and the modern West, either. Be it Andrei Sinyavsky in Paris, Alexander Zinovyev in Munich or Irina Ratushinskaya in London – each of them, while being engaged in work of much importance and use for their compatriots, is actually separated from the host country's main cultural trends. Of hundreds of writers who have emigrated to the United States, only Iosif Brodsky and Vassily Aksyonov have become an organic part of the international intellectual community, without forfeiting the distinctiveness of their own work. Others, not content with the fickle attention of the Russian-speaking community, make contacts with their American surroundings, even though with difficulty. These problems confronting the émigré intellectual were best described, perhaps, by Sergei Dovlatov who, after almost fifteen years in the USA until his untimely death in August 1990, never mastered English and spoke it "much worse than the parrot on sale in the pet shop at the 14th Street, Manhattan".

Importing Tarzan, exporting Chekhov

Since the early nineties, the practice of measuring out cultural contacts in small doses has been rapidly receding into the past, but the much-coveted freedom has thrown many into confusion even panic. The difference in living standards has transmuted the idea of cultural exchange into "one-way traffic": all that is more or less competitive in Soviet culture, especially in the perfoming sphere, rushed to the West. The shortage of hard currency has sharply reduced our potential for hosting foreign art groups and purchasing modern works of literature and art. Unbri-

dled commercialism, thriving on our plublic's uncultivated taste, has led to the domination of cheap Hollywood movies on our screens and of cheap translated "whodunits" on our book market featuring Tarzan, Nick Carter and other long-forgotten heroes.

The most alarming thing about the present cultural situation is that our intelligentsia seems to have nothing to offer the outside world in the way of basic cultural values emerging from the present day and new basic cultural values which have come to stay. "Export" productions of classical plays (like Chekhov's *Three Sisters* by Robert Sturua) or time-serving movies which shamelessly exploit the national image and the perestroika theme just won't do.

Heritage lost

What general ideas should our country be guided by if it is to stand the numerous trials awaiting it and to keep its place among the world's great powers by the early 21st century? All the home policy discussions now in progress centre upon Solzhenitsyn's concept of the Russian Union as the probable nucleus of a larger formation. The tradition of gathering lands, and the fact that we are a Eurasian state, can be neither dismissed, nor revised. History and geography have assigned to our country the role of a bridge between West and East. However, the unification of lands and ethnic groups should be strictly voluntary and, economic considerations apart, the Russian democratic intelligentsia's still persistent emphasis on "spirituality at all costs" can play a role here.

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

As I see it, spirituality is by no means synonymous with religiousness. Over the past few years religious quests have been largely a matter of fashion and therefore not quite trustworthy, while the modern Russian Orthodox Church is not an independent force, unfortunately. Some of the mainstays of traditional Russian spirituality have survived through decades of destruction. One of them was best described by the émigré philosopher Fyodor Stepun who pointed out that "a special spirituality – which I'd rather refer to as humaneness – of Russian nature is the reverse side of the Russian people being part of nature and deeply attached to land..."

Another manifestation of this rare quality is a passion for reading which persists even in this age of television and home video. Most Soviet citizens have built up rich private libraries; however, a joint effort of the school, enlightenment societies, and literary critics is required to educate them so that they can make the most of this wealth. The ruthless Soviet epoch has ploughed up almost the entire cultural stratum of society leaving only tiny patches of our cultural heritage intact. Now we cherish those patches and, following Thomas Wolfe who lamented the loss of historical memory by his compatriots, "try to recall our great language, to find the path to the sky we've lost, the key to the door which has slammed to."

The reason why the pragmatic Europeans and Americans haven't lost all respect for us yet lies in our capacity and taste for intellectual quests. These qualities are all the more precious since they have survived inspite of all the ordeals we have gone through. The Soviet people belonging to a certain generation have inherited from the recent past – along with a host of prejudices and psychological complexes – a commendable disposition towards conceptual thinking, which continues to foster their eagerness (which onlookers find amazing) to discern the outlines of the coming new world order which they are determined to be part of. The craving for spirituality remains in spite of everything; hence the hope that we shall have something to share with other nations in the process of a wide-ranging cultural exchange. ■

His address: Perm–35

Six years after the first sentence the court has admitted that Alexander Goldovich "also had some positive views"

The fate of the 44-year-old Alexander Goldovich, who is serving his term in the notorious Perm prison camp No.35, is tragic yet at the same time it is not unlike a preposterous farce being played out by a man and a system, both equally lacking in common sense.

Goldovich and his 20-year-old wife Natalya Sokolova were arrested in April 1985, coincidentally on Lenin's birthady, as they were trying to cross the border. Those were also the days when perestroika was beginning to come into its own, but its development was not anticipated by the couple that ventured across the Black Sea to Turkey on a small rubber raft bought in a children's store.

Goldovich wanted to emigrate, but since he had been trained as a physicist he had no chance at all. Hence this preposterous raft. Later on Goldovich explained that he had no intention of coming out against the regime and so decided to leave the country without causing harm to anyone. The border guards did not notice the raft – it has been returned already from neutral waters by the vigilant crew of a fishing vessel.

After he had been taken ashore, Goldovich initially maintained that he was an American by the name of Golding. But soon, broken and depressed, he began to talk. The man who could be sentenced only under Article 83 of the RSFSR Criminal Code (illegal crossing of the border – up to 3 years of imprisonment) made for himself a "political" case: Article 64 ("high treason"), Article 70 ("anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda"), Article 75 ("divulgence of a State secret") and – to make the picture complete – Article 88 ("violation of the currency exchange regulations")

The last charge was based on the fact that Goldovich had given a foreigner some rubles in exchange for his **promise** to return the sum in dollars if they ever met in the West. The charge of the divulgence of the State secret was based on Goldovich's own statement about his **intention** to reveal to the West (to the West in general, and not to someone specifically) information about the secret Soviet nuclear tests done in violation of the signed treaties (later it turned out that Goldovich did not have any concrete information and that that was merely a questionable form of pacifism). Goldovich told the investigator that he had asked his friends to pass that "information" to an acquaintance who was married to an American woman.

In the sentence that was passed not in the 1960s–1970s and not even in 1980 but in 1985, his "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" was described as follows:

Goldovich told his wife that the country must have several parties and a real parliament; he slanderously stated that there were no democratic freedoms in the USSR; and approved of private entrepreneural activities. He also stated that the socialist system had no future, perverted the domestic and foreign policy of the CPSU (criticized the invasion of Afghanistan. – **Ed.**) In addition, in Goldovich's home they found writings of Berdyaev, Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, and Orwell, and on Goldovich himself – "tendentious information" about the Soviet way of life (about foodstuff shortages, etc.).

The sentence was 15 years of hard labour with the confiscation of property plus 5 years in exile. This is how Alexander Goldovich found himself in Perm.

Alexander Goldovich: 5 more years to do

Natalya Sokolova has done 18 months under Article 83, divorced her husband and married another man.

Goldovich's prison camp mates remember that in the beginning he seemed to have decided to come in for an early discharge with exemplary behaviour – he did not clash with the administration. But later he joined the active struggle for the rights of other prisoners.

Goldovich insisted that the prison camp administration should allow prisoners to have access to literature on law (in particular, the UN standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners) and religious literature (the Byelorussian Goldovich has become a staunch Catholic). He demanded that he and his camp mates be openly called "political prisoners," and proclaimed plans to organize hunger strikes as a means of protest during the days of international meetings. Probably because of this he has recently been deprived of the right to receive an extra parcel from home.

The years of imprisonment have been rough on Goldovich. He suffers from an ulcer, enterocolitis, and varicose veins. He has a broken rib and he has recently injured his hand while operating the lathe. The lawyer Tatiana Kuznetsova, who visited Goldovich last December, noticed that his speech was slow and unemotional.

At that time Goldovich had 10 more years in camp. But early in 1991, in response to the lawyer's complaint, the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Court changed the sentence substantially.

Article 70 in its old form does not exist any more – but Goldovich has already served the term under this article. The court has agreed with the lawyer that when he set out for his unsuccessful voyage Goldovich was guided by his personal motives and "did not act intentionally to the detriment of the State security and defence." The court has also dropped the charge of divulgence of the State secret. "However," says Tatiana Kuznetsova, "even with this qualification of Goldovich's actions the court had a formal possibility not to change the punishment." But the judges decided not to engage in casuistry and under the new sentence they have reduced the term of the punishment practically by half, and in this Kuznetsova sees the "sign of the times." The court's ruling also contains a phrase to the effect that "Goldovich also had some positive views."

Alexander Goldovich has 5 more years to do. In Moscow he is awaited by his mother, invalid of the second category, and his sister. Three years ago they went to Perm. It is not easy to make another trip there – even physically.

Lev Yelin

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